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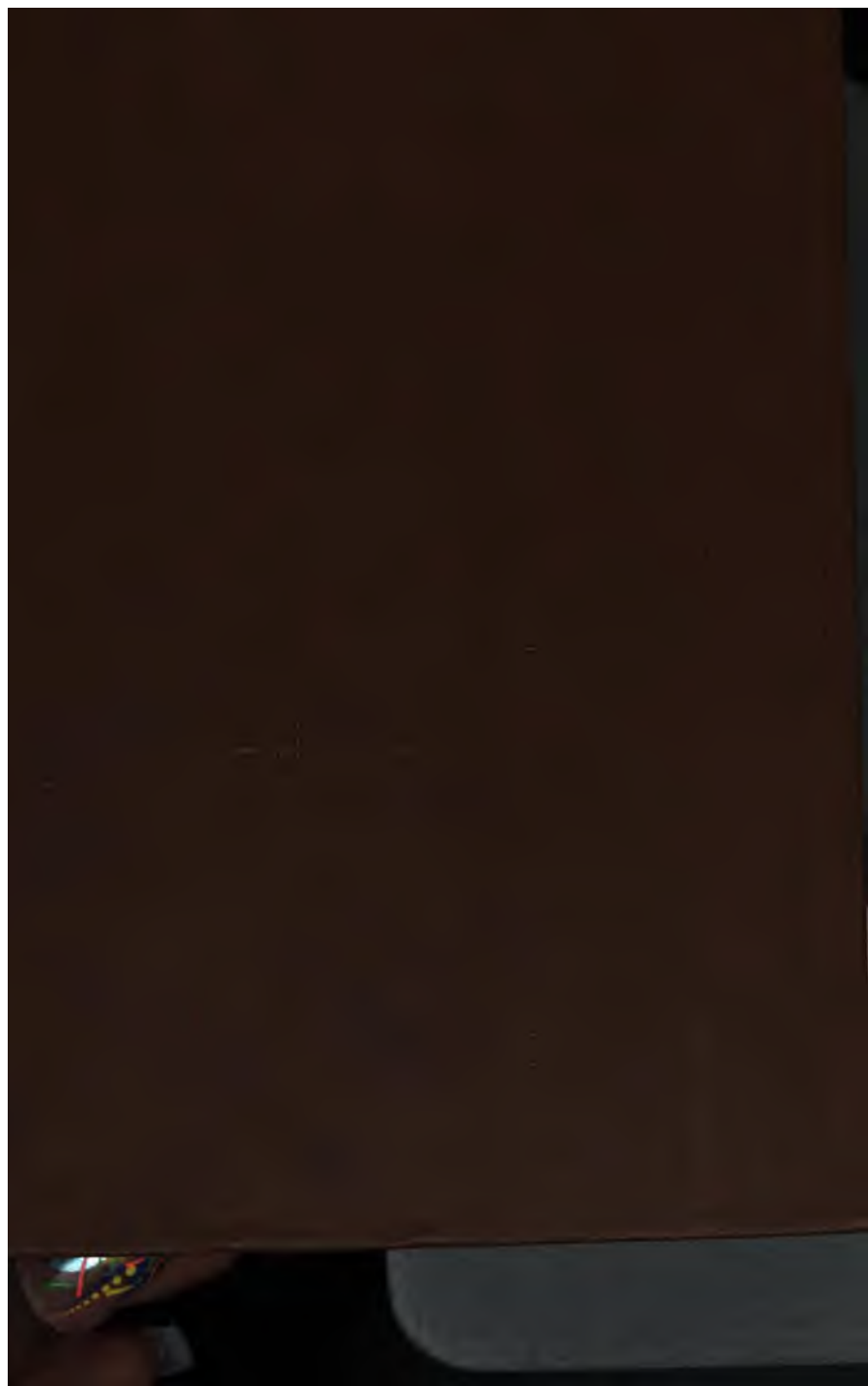
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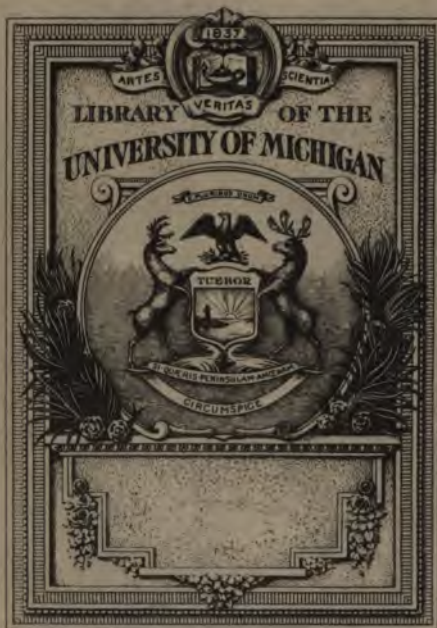
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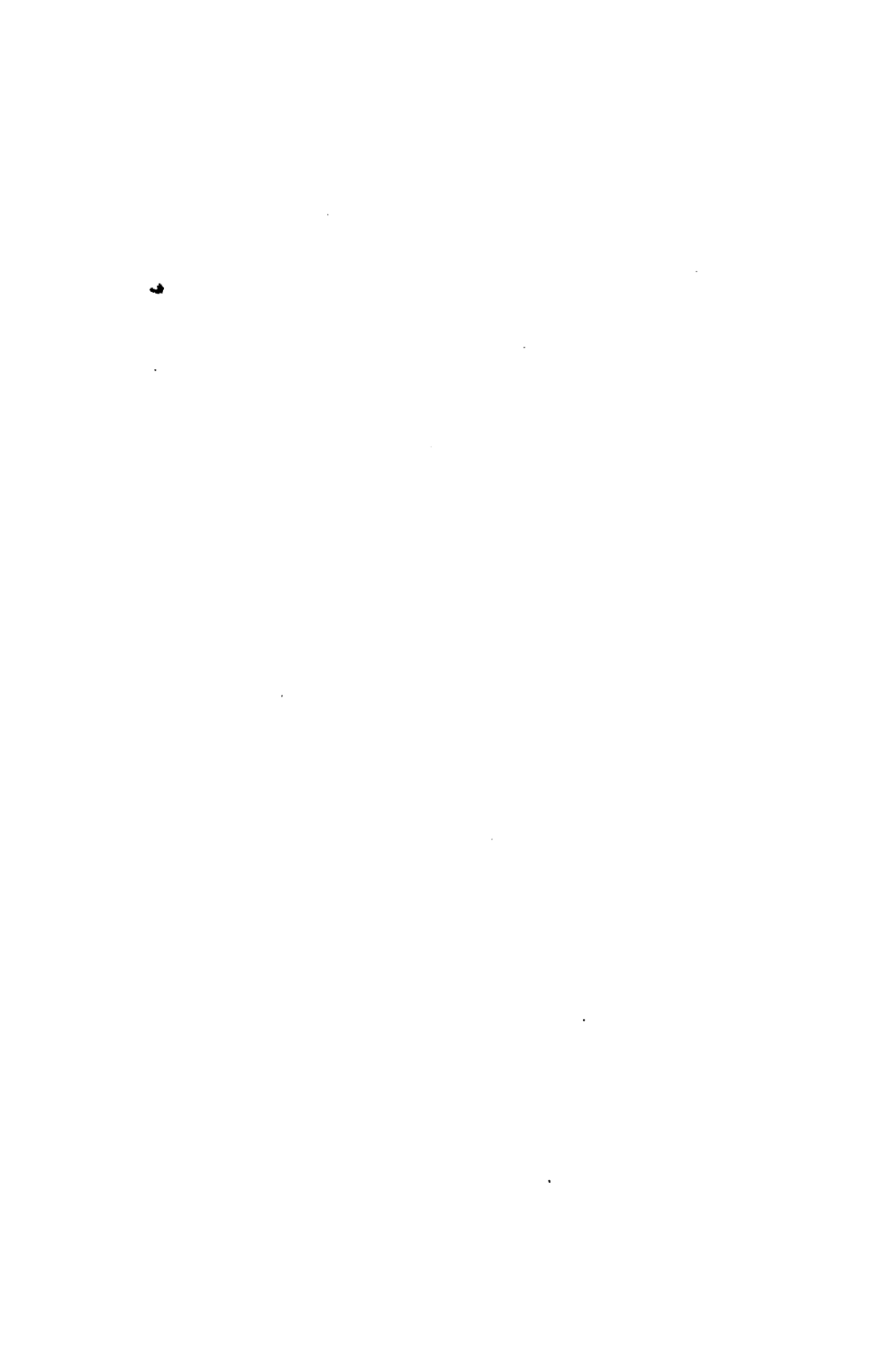
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ENGLISH AND
AMERICAN
LITERATURE

STUDIES IN LITERARY
CRITICISM, INTER-
PRETATION AND
HISTORY



By C. H. SYLVESTER

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Period of French Influence

I. THE AGE OF THE RESTORATION

1660-1702

The Restoration

With the Restoration appeared a different spirit and English literature felt it at once. This will be easily understood when it is remembered that the Restoration came at a time when France was reaching the height of its glory under the reign of its famous monarch, Louis XIV. He was a patron of art, science and letters, and some of the greatest writers France has ever known were at the zenith of their power. Molière, Racine and Corneille perfected the drama, Fénelon and Bossuet led in moral philosophy and pulpit oratory, and as a story teller La Fontaine excelled in his fables. Added to this was the fact that Charles II and many of his courtiers had spent their exile in France, and in the brilliant court of its powerful king had imbibed manners, customs and a certain literary taste that they could not fail to carry back with them to England.

French influence soon became paramount. It has been said that within the first forty years of the Restoration more French words were incorporated into the English language than came in during the next century and a half. But the influence did not cease with the introduction of words. The classic spirit began to prevail and far more attention was given to the form of expression. Nature ceased gradually to be an

English Literature

inspiration, and the riotous spirit of the former age gave place to a more restrained style, to greater polish in phrases.

But the greatest change that characterized the age of the Restoration came as a result of the reaction from Puritan harshness and narrowness of view. Charles and his nobles, finding themselves welcomed so ardently by the English who had demonstrated the failure of Puritanical government, set about establishing a court which soon became the vilest in Christendom. Virtue was scoffed at and nothing was too sacred for their obscene jests. Under their influence the drama became so corrupt that the writers who pandered to their taste have been buried in oblivion. It will be remembered that John Milton wrote his greatest poems and John Bunyan completed his finest allegory after Charles came to the throne, but they are extraordinary survivals of the Puritan age and the wonder is that they could continue their labors amidst the hideous tumult that surrounded them. The heart went out of literature and feeling ceased to characterize it. People sought in the pleasures of the intellect a rest from the emotional terrors of religious excitement.

Puritan mannerisms lent themselves readily to ridicule and one of the most brilliant productions of the age was the keen burlesque *Hudibras* in which Samuel Butler satirized the Presbyterians and Independents, the two leading sects of Puri-

John Dryden

tans, under the characters of the fanatical Justice Hudibras and his clerk Ralph. Pictured as knight errant and squire they pass through many ridiculous adventures. The poem is long and the reader tires of the strained situations and continuous satire, but it was very popular when printed and Charles and his friends were incessantly quoting its witty lines.

Samuel Pepys, one of the few upright officials, has left in his *Diary* a gossipy and life-like account of the nine years following the accession of Charles II. The curiosity and persistence of Pepys made him an apt chronicler and his is the most accurate picture we have of those strange days. It was an age of scientific inquiry, and keen intellects struggled with great problems. John Locke made his great contribution to human thought in the *Essay on the Human Understanding* and Sir Isaac Newton completed his marvelous discoveries in physical science.

John
Dryden John Dryden is the representative writer of the age. In literary criticism which is the chief subject of his prose, he furnished a model free from the long, inverted, and involved sentences which had characterized the earlier writers. His political satires are without equal and some of his lyrics are unsurpassed. He was the first of the real literary artists, and achieved renown in nearly every department in which he made an attempt. On

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page 205 of Part Eight will be found *Alexander's Feast*, and a sketch of Dryden's life is given on page 266 of the same Part.

It was the habit of the literary men then and for many years thereafter to meet at coffee-houses and exchange their views on all subjects. Conversation became an art ; and at Will's Coffee-house Dryden presided over as gay an assemblage of wits as ever in Ben Jonson's time met at the Mermaid Tavern, of which Beaumont said,

“What things 'have we seen
Done at the Mermaid ! heard words that have
been
So nimble, and so full of subtile flame,
As if that every one from whence they came
Had meant to put his whole wit in a jest,
And had resolved to live a fool the rest
Of his dull life.”

The Age of the Restoration saw an abrupt decline in the drama ; in poetry it was marked by a falling away from natural standards and an adherence to formalism, but in prose it made a decided advance toward types of modern excellence.

Studies

1. What were the reasons for the influence French culture had upon English literature?

2. Study your maps again and see how near together England and France really are. Study your histories and see what the governmental relations between France and England had been.

3. Why should this be called the Age of the Restoration? If Milton and Bunyan wrote their greatest works after Charles II became king why should not they be classified with the writers of the Restoration? How many years did Milton live after Charles was restored? How many did Bunyan live? Why was Bunyan imprisoned?

4. Who was the greatest poet of the Restoration? What is his greatest poem? Learn ten lines from it.

5. What do you think brought about the prominence of conversation in this age? When and from what place was coffee introduced into England? What luxuries then but recently known tended to bring about sociability?

Period of French Influence

II. THE AGE OF QUEEN ANNE

1702-1744

The Age of Queen Anne

Queen Anne Between the days of Milton and of Pope another great revolution passed over England ; but this time, owing to the fact that people were ready for the change, the revolution was a bloodless one. James II, after trying to rule without Parliament and in defiance of the wishes of his people, and after using every means in his power to re-establish the Catholic religion, was quietly pushed aside and Protestant William and Mary were invited to accept the crown he was incompetent to wear. But a little later Mary died and her sister Anne, obstinate and unlearned, yet an ardent Protestant, became Queen of England. The revolution which had resulted in the abdication of James marked the inception of a new order of things, and though intrigue and war continued to occupy public attention, yet a broader spirit of toleration was in the air and persecution for political or religious belief practically ceased.

The literature of this age, which again extends beyond the reign of the queen whose name the epoch bears, is not remarkable for one genius of surpassing merit as was the Age of Elizabeth, but for a group of writers each so excellent in his way that this has been called the Augustan Age and

English Literature

really ranks second to that of Elizabeth only. It might better be called the Classical Age, for the dominating spirit was a devotion to form and to manner of expression. The influence of French classicism reached its highest mark and through Pope its finest expression. For prose, this classic revival was of immeasurable benefit, as it brought clearness and elegance where before had been obscurity and roughness. Though there was danger that mere form would be regarded above matter, yet the guiding spirit of Swift and Addison saved English prose from the formalism that destroyed the true spirit of poetry.

In this age was established the first daily newspaper, a pitiable little sheet that struggled along despairingly against the influence of the coffee-house gossip and political pamphleteering. Now almost for the first time, literature came to exert a really important influence in governmental affairs. The Puritans had carried a printing press with them in their war with the Cavaliers and had fired many an effective broadside from its rude types, but it remained for the fierce strife between Whigs and Tories in the reigns of Anne and the Georges to bring literature fully into politics. Scarcely a writer of any importance kept out of the arena. Pope used all his wit and Gay his ingenuity; Addison laughed good humoredly; the half-mad Swift vented his spite in satires made immortal by his fertile invention, and DeFoe was

Jonathan Swift

an ardent writer of Whig pamphlets before he produced *Robinson Crusoe*.

Robinson
Crusoe

The first prose story of lasting merit was *Robinson Crusoe*, which has been read and enjoyed by more boys than any other ever written and is interesting to us as containing the germ of the novel. Although DeFoe does not show us the passion of love that forms so large a part of the modern novel, yet he does show the influence of circumstance in the development of character, and leaving aside all the glamour of chivalry and the influence of magic, he brings partial happiness to Crusoe on his desert island, with remarkable realism.

Jonathan
Swift

Standing next to Pope by virtue of his keen and masterful intellect is Jonathan Swift whose unhappy life shows all too clearly the destructive effects of unfavorable environment in childhood and disappointed ambitions in later life. Never knowing the care of loving parents, educated by the unwilling charity of a harsh and unsympathetic uncle, conscious of the superiority of his own mind but meeting everywhere with indifference or open rebuffs, he became bitter and misanthropic, brooding over ills he could not overcome. Besides this, he suffered from some obscure brain disease that finally brought him in his old age to years of blank idiocy.

Educated at Trinity College, Dublin, he was awhile private secretary to a nobleman who

English Literature

treated him as a dependent; then he was rector of a small parish in Ireland, a country he seemed to detest; later, in London, he quarreled with the Whigs and becoming a violent partisan of the Tories wrote some of his strongest satires in their behalf; in 1713 he was appointed Dean of St. Patrick's Cathedral in Dublin and in 1814 at the death of Queen Anne, seeing no hope of further preferment, he retired to Ireland where he spent the remainder of his days. His love for Esther Johnson, whom he speaks of as *Stella*, and the ardent attachment borne him by Hester Vanhomrigh, whom he named *Vanessa*, have been the source of much comment by succeeding writers. That his behavior to these women was cruel and heartless is true and their unhappy lives are another evidence of the fatality that hung about the moody Dean.

Gulliver's
Travels His satire, *A Tale of a Tub*, was intended to ridicule the Romanists and Calvinists and to uphold the church of England, but its very success stood in the way of his advancement. The greatest work he achieved was *Gulliver's Travels*, a new style of fiction that took the world by storm. Its originality seemed to disarm the critics and its biting satire could not successfully be combated. The plan of the work was to tell the strange and wonderful adventures of one Lemuel Gulliver in his voyages to certain marvelous countries whose people differed from us

Gulliver's Travels

in some startling form but whose manners and customs were much the same. In his first voyage he goes to the country of Lilliput, whose inhabitants are about six inches high and where everything else is dwarfed in exact proportion. In the second voyage the men are huge creatures, some sixty feet in height, and here again Swift's vivid imagination has enabled him to keep the right proportions in every detail. The truthful manner in which all this is described and the curious and amusing incidents so vividly brought out give an air of reality that makes the story popular to-day. Purged of the coarseness that seems inseparable from Dean Swift, the voyage among the Lilliputians and the following one among the Brobdingnagians make most delightful reading for children. Another voyage is made to the flying Island of Laputa, and a fourth to the land of the Houyhnhnms. In the last, horses are the ruling beings, possessing all the intellectual and moral traits of mankind, while the men are reduced to vulgar and disgusting beasts known as Yahoos. The satire which is attractive in the first voyage grows increasingly bitter till it is little less than rabid invective in the last.

The two following quotations will give an idea of the style of *Gulliver's Travels*. The first is from his voyage among the Lilliputs; the second tells of his introduction among the Brobdingnagians:

English Literature

“And here it may perhaps divert the curious reader to give some account of my domestics and my manner of living in this country during a residence of nine months and thirteen days. Having a head mechanically turned, and being likewise forced by necessity, I had made for myself a table and chair convenient enough, out of the largest trees in the royal park. Two hundred seamstresses were employed to make me shirts and linen for my bed and table, all of the strongest and coarsest kind they could get: which, however, they were forced to quilt together in several folds, for the thickest was some degrees finer than lawn. Their linen is usually three inches wide and three feet make a piece. The seamstresses took my measure as I lay on the ground, one standing at my neck and another at my mid-leg with a strong cord extended that each held by the end, while a third measured the length of the cord with a rule of an inch long. Then they measured my right thumb and desired no more, for, by mathematical computation, that twice round the thumb is once round the wrist, and so on to the neck and waist, and by the help of an old shirt which I displayed before them on the ground for a pattern, they fitted me exactly. Three hundred tailors

Gulliver's Travels

were employed in the same manner to make me clothes; but they had another contrivance for taking my measure. I kneeled down and they raised a ladder from the ground to my neck ; upon this ladder one of them mounted, and let fall a plumb-line from my collar to the floor, which just answered the length of my coat ; but my waist and arms I measured myself. When my clothes were finished, (which was done in my house, for the largest of theirs would not have been able to hold them) they looked like the patch-work made by the ladies in England, only that mine were all of a color.

I had three hundred cooks to dress my victuals in little convenient huts built about my house, where they and their families lived and prepared me two dishes apiece. I took up twenty waiters in my hands and placed them on the table ; a hundred more attended below on the ground, some with dishes of meat, and some with barrels of wine, and other liquors slung on their shoulders, all which the waiters above drew up, as I wanted, in a very ingenious manner by certain cords, as we draw the bucket up a well in Europe. A dish of their meat was a good mouthful, and a barrel of their liquor a reasonable draught. Their

English Literature

mutton yields to ours, but their beef is excellent. I have had a sirloin so large that I have been forced to make three bites of it ; but this is rare. My servants were astonished to see me eat it bones and all, as in this country we do the leg of a lark. Their geese and turkeys I usually eat at a mouthful, and I confess they far excel ours. Of their smaller fowls I could take up twenty or thirty at the end of my knife."

"Scared and confounded as I was, I could not forbear going on with these reflections, when one of the reapers approaching within ten yards of the ridge where I lay, made me apprehend that with the next step I should be squashed to death under his foot, or cut in two with his reaping hook ; and, therefore, when he was again about to move, I screamed as loud as fear could make me; whereupon the huge creature stopped short, and looking round about under him for some time, at last spied me as I lay on the ground. He considered awhile, with the caution of one who endeavors to lay hold on a small, dangerous animal in such a manner that it shall not be able either to scratch or bite him, as I myself have sometimes done with a weasel in England. At

Gulliver's Travels

length he ventured to take me behind, by the middle, between his finger and thumb, and brought me within three yards of his eyes that he might behold my shape more perfectly. I guessed his meaning and my good fortune gave me so much presence of mind, that I resolved not to struggle in the least, as he held me in the air above sixty feet from the ground, though he grievously pinched my sides, lest I should slip through his fingers. All I ventured was to raise mine eyes to the sun, and place my hands together in a supplicating posture, and to speak some words in a humble, melancholy tone, suitable to the condition I was now in ; for I apprehended every moment that he would dash me to the ground, as we do some hateful little animal which we have a mind to destroy. But my good star would have it, that he appeared pleased with my voice and gestures, and began to look on me as a curiosity, much wondering to hear me pronounce articulate words, although he could not understand them. In the meantime I was not able to forbear groaning and shedding tears, and turning my head towards my sides, letting him know, as well as I could, how cruelly I was hurt by the pressure of his thumb and finger. He seemed to apprehend my

English Literature

meaning, for, lifting up the lappet of his coat he put me gently into it, and immediately ran along with me to his master, who was a substantial farmer, and the same person I had first seen in the field.

The farmer having (as I suppose by their talk) received such an account of me as his servant could give him, took a piece of small straw about the size of a walking stick and therewith lifted up the lappets of my coat, which it seems he thought to be some kind of covering given me by nature. He blew my hair aside to get a better view of my face ; he called his hands about him and asked them, as I afterwards learned, 'whether they had ever seen in the fields any little creature that resembled me ;' he then placed me softly on the ground on all fours, but I immediately got up and walked slowly backward and forward to let him see I had no intent to run away. Then all sat down in a circle about me, the better to observe my motions. I pulled off my hat and made a low bow to the farmer ; I fell on my knees, lifted up my hands and eyes, and spoke several words as loud as I could ; I took a purse of gold out of my pocket and humbly presented it to him. He received it on the palm of his hand, then applied it close to

Gulliver's Travels

his eye to see what it was, and afterwards turned it several times with the point of a pin, but could make nothing of it, whereupon I made a sign that he should put his hand upon the ground ; I then took the purse and opening it poured all the gold into his palm ; I saw him wet the tip of his finger upon his tongue and take up one of my largest pieces, and then another, but he seemed to be wholly ignorant what they were. He made me a sign to put them again into my purse, and the purse again into my pocket, which, after offering to him several times, I thought it best to do.

The farmer by this time was convinced that I must be a rational creature. He spoke often to me, but the sound of his voice pierced my ears like that of a water-mill, yet his words were articulate enough. I answered as loud as I could in various languages, and he often laid his ear within two feet of me, but all in vain, for we were wholly unintelligible to each other. He then sent his servants to their work, and taking his handkerchief out of his pocket, he doubled it and spread it on his left hand, which he placed flat on the ground with palm upwards, making me a sign to step into it, which I could easily do, for it was not above a foot in thickness. I

English Literature

thought it my part to obey, and for fear of falling, laid myself at full length upon the handkerchief, with the remainder of which he looped me up to the head for further security, and in this manner he carried me home to his house. Then he called his wife and showed me to her ; but she screamed and ran back, as women in England do at the sight of a toad or spider. However, when she had awhile seen my behavior and how well I obeyed the signs her husband made me, she was soon reconciled, and by degrees became extremely tender of me.

It was about twelve at noon and a servant brought in dinner. It was only one substantial dish of meat (fit for the plain condition of a husbandman) on a dish of about four and twenty feet in diameter. The company were the farmer and his wife, three children, and an old grandmother. When they sat down, the farmer placed me at some distance from him on the table, which was thirty feet high from the floor. I was in a terrible fright, and kept as far as I could from the edge for fear of falling. The wife minced a bit of meat, then crumbled some bread on a trencher, and placed it before me. I made her a low bow, took out my knife and fork and fell to eat,

Gulliver's Travels

which gave them exceeding delight. The mistress sent her maid for a small drain-cup which held about two gallons and filled it with drink ; I took up the vessel with much difficulty in both hands and in a most respectful manner, drank to her ladyship's health, expressing the words as loud as I could in English, which made the company laugh so heartily, that I was almost deafened with the noise. This liquor tasted like a small cider, and was not unpleasant. Then the master made me a sign to come to his trencher side ; but as I walked on the table, being in great surprise all the time, as the indulgent reader will easily conceive and excuse, I happened to stumble against a crust and fell flat on my face, but received no hurt. I got up immediately, and observing the good people to be in much concern, I took my hat (which I held under my arm out of good manners) and waving it over my head, made three huzzas to show that I had got no mischief by my fall.

But advancing forward towards my master (as I shall henceforth call him) his youngest son, who sat next to him, an arch boy of about ten years old, took me up by the legs and held me so high in the air that I trembled in every limb ; but his father snatched me

English Literature

from him, and at the same time gave him such a box on the ear as would have felled a European troop-of-horse to the earth, ordering him to be taken from the table. But being afraid the boy might owe me a spite, and well remembering how mischievous all children among us are to sparrows, rabbits, young kittens and puppy dogs, I fell on my knees, and pointing to the boy, made my master to understand as well as I could that I desired his son should be pardoned. The father complied, and the lad took his seat again, whereupon I went to him and kissed his hand, which my master took, and made him stroke me gently with it.

In the midst of dinner my mistress' favorite cat leaped into her lap. I heard a noise behind me like that of a dozen stocking weavers at work, and turning my head, I found it proceeded from the purring of that animal, who seemed to be three times larger than an ox, as I computed by the view of her head and one of her paws, while her mistress was feeding and stroking her. The fierceness of this creature's countenance discomposed me, though I stood at the farthest end of the table, above fifty feet off ; and although my mistress held her fast, for fear she would spring and

Swift's Style

seize me in her talons. But it happened there was no danger, for the cat took not the least notice of me, when my master placed me within three yards of her. And, as I have been always told, and found true by experience in my travels, that flying or discovering fear before a strange animal, is a certain way to make it pursue or attack you, so I resolved in this dangerous juncture to show no manner of concern. I walked with intrepidity five or six times before the very head of the cat, and came within half a yard of her, whereupon she drew herself back as if afraid of me. I had less apprehension concerning the dogs, whereof three or four came into the room, as is usual in farmers' houses ; one of which was a mastiff, equal in bulk to four elephants, and a greyhound, somewhat taller than the mastiff, but not so large."

**Swift's
Style** Swift's style is remarkably clear and terse with little attempt at ornamentation. He nowhere shows sublimity or pathos, and his wit is of that cruel kind that rejoices in the discomfiture and suffering of its object. He was master of a kind of bitter philosophy that often manifested itself in pithily expressed thoughts, of which here are a few examples :

English Literature

"We have just religion enough to make us *hate*, but not enough to make us *love* one another."

"I am apt to think that, in the day of judgment, there will be small allowance given to the wise for their want of morals, or to the ignorant for their want of faith, because both are without excuse. This renders the advantages equal of ignorance and knowledge. But some scruples in the wise, and some vices in the ignorant, will perhaps be forgiven upon the strength of temptation to each."

"The reason why so few marriages are happy, is because young ladies spend their time in making nets, not in making cages."

"He gave it for his opinion that whoever could make two ears of corn or two blades of grass grow where only one grew before, would deserve better of his mankind, and do more essential service to his country, than this whole race of politicians put together."

"Censure is the tax a man payeth to the public for being eminent."

"No wise man ever wished to be younger."

"An idle reason lessens the weight of the good ones you gave before."

Joseph Addison

Quite in contrast to Dean Swift's is the charming figure of Joseph Addison, whose delightful style is still a model in English prose. He was prominent in the political world but it is as an essayist that he is chiefly known. His genius created the *Tatler* and its more brilliant successor, the *Spectator*, though in both there acted as his collaborator a friend and early school-mate, the good-natured, careless, happy-go-lucky "Dick" Steele who "preferred the state of his mind to the state of his fortune."

In Part Four, page 145, will be found a sketch of the *Spectator*, and a brief life of Addison on page 183; while on pages 149, 155, 161, 169 and 174, are a few of his choicest essays.

Alexander Pope The account of this age properly closes with Alexander Pope, the most famous exponent of the purely artificial in writing. His genius redeemed his work from the commonplace and he left for the world more aphorisms and finely polished, quotable lines than any other English poet. His rhyming couplet so frequently complete in thought, helped to keep his words alive. Swift said of this:

"In Pope I cannot read a line
But with a sigh I wish it mine,
When he can in one couplet fix
More sense than I can do in six."

A few quotations from different poems will further illustrate the value of his couplet :

English Literature

"Whoever thinks a faultless piece to see
Thinks what ne'er was nor is, nor e'er shall be."

"A little learning is a dangerous thing ;
Drink deep or taste not the Pierian spring."

"True wit is nature to advantage dress'd ;
What oft was thought, but ne'er so well express'd."

"On life's vast ocean diversely we sail,
Reason the card, but passion is the gale."

"The hungry judges soon the sentence sign,
And wretches hang that jurymen may dine."

"'Tis not enough no harshness gives offence,
The sound must seem an echo to the sense."

"Honor and shame from no condition rise ;
Act well your part, there all the honor lies."

"Know then this truth—enough for man to know—
Virtue alone is happiness below."

There are no pictures of nature or of simple emotion in all his writings. "He is the poet of town life, of high life and of literary life," said Jeffrey ; and Lowell agrees with him : "As truly as Shakespeare is the poet of man—as God made him, dealing with great passions and innate motives, so truly is Pope the poet of society, the delineator of manners, the exposé of those motives that may be called acquired, whose spring is in the institutions and habits of purely 'local origin.'"

Pope's deformed little body, so small that he

Alexander Pope

could not use an ordinary chair at table, and his fine manners, were in almost ludicrous contrast and were often the subject of ridicule. From boyhood he was poor and sickly and because his father was a Catholic he was subjected to all sorts of annoyances. He had but little schooling and his education was sadly defective. Still, he was a precocious child, as this *Ode to Solitude* written when he was but twelve years old will show :

Happy the man whose wish and care
A few paternal acres bound,
Content to breathe his native air
In his own ground.

Whose herds with milk, whose fields with bread,
Whose flocks supply him with attire;
Whose trees in summer yield him shade,
In winter, fire.

Blest, who can unconcern'dly find
Hours, days, and years glide soft away
In health of body, peace of mind,
Quiet by day,

Sound sleep by night; study and ease
Together mixed; sweet recreation,
And innocence which most does please
With meditation.

English Literature

Thus let me live, unseen, unknown;
Thus unlamented let me die;
Steal from the world, and not a stone
Tell where I lie.

He devoted his life to the study of poetry and in spite of the deficiencies of his education, he mastered his art as he understood it. Beginning with a warm admiration of Dryden, then the literary arbiter of elegance, he was always to a considerable extent under the influence of his friends, and among them were the most prominent literary men of his time. He was introduced to the society of the Coffee House wits by the gay dramatist Wycherley, although the latter was nearly fifty years older than the boy poet. Addison was a warm friend with whom Pope subsequently quarreled and against whom he pointed some of his sharpest satire; John Gay, whom Pope described as

“Of manners gentle, of affections mild,
In wit a man, simplicity a child,”

was the nearest and dearest of these friends, while Dean Swift and Lord Bolingbroke were almost equally attracted to him.

In character Pope seemed to be as deformed as in body. He found falsehood preferable to truth, dissimulation better than frankness, and, jealous as a petted child, refused to be comforted if he was not made the chief figure wherever he went.

Alexander Pope

His fastidious taste made him dress with greatest care and his little sword became as familiar a sight as his court dress.

But his life is instructive for it is quite possible to forgive much to a man who, so weak that he was unable to stand without being bandaged and so helpless that he could not dress himself alone, yet made himself the "prince of lyric poets, unrivaled in satire, ethics and polished versification," and "put poetry into a bondage from which it was not freed for a hundred years."

His literary life divides itself into three periods: first, an experimental period in which he tried his hand at many kinds of poetry, and produced his *Essay on Criticism* and the mock heroic poem *The Rape of the Lock*; second, a period of drudgery that resulted in giving to the English a fine metrical translation of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, and in establishing himself with an independent fortune; and last, the period he devoted to his great moral and satirical works. Chief among the last are the *Dunciad*, a vehement satire in which he overthrows with savage attack every literary man who had incurred his ill will by any offense to his unbearable pride and arrogance; and the *Essay on Man*, a philosophical poem in which he proposed "to vindicate the ways of God to man." The latter poem is not now read so much for its philosophy as for its style, and some idea of what that is may be gained from these extracts:

English Literature

“O Happiness ! our being’s end and aim,
Good, Pleasure, Ease, Content, whate’er thy
 name;
That something still which prompts th’ eter-
 nal sigh,
For which we bear to live, or dare to die;
Which still so near us, yet beyond us lies,
O’erlooked, seen double by the fool and wise !
Plant of celestial seed ! if dropped below,
Say, in what mortal soil thou deign’st to grow ?
Fair opening to some court’s propitious shine,
Or deep with diamonds in the flaming mine ?
Twined with the wreaths Parnassian laurels
 yield,
Or reaped in iron harvests of the field ?
Where grows ! — where grows it not ? If vain
 our toil,
We ought to blame the culture, not the soil:
Fixed to no spot is Happiness sincere;
’Tis nowhere to be found, or everywhere;
’Tis never to be bought, but always free,
And, fled from monarchs, *St. John!* dwells
 with thee.
Ask of the learned the way ! The learned are
 blind ;
This bids to serve, and that to shun mankind;
Some place the bliss in action, some in ease;
Those call it pleasure, and contentment these;

The Poetry of Pope

Some, sunk to beasts, find pleasure end in
pain;
Some swelled to gods, confess e'en virtue vain;
Or indolent, to each extreme they fall,
To trust in everything, or doubt of all."

"Heaven from all creatures hides the book
of fate,
All but the page prescribed, the present state;
From brutes what men, from men what spirits
know,
Or who could suffer being here below?
The lamb thy riot dooms to bleed to-day,
Had he thy reason, would he skip and play?
Pleased to the last, he crops the flowery food,
And licks the hand just raised to shed his
blood.
Oh, blindness to the future, kindly given,
That each may fill the circle marked by
Heaven;
Who sees with equal eye, as God of all,
A hero perish, or a sparrow fall —
Atoms or systems into ruin hurled,
And now a bubble burst, and now a world.
Hope humbly then, with trembling pinions
soar,
Wait the great teacher, Death, and God
adore.

English Literature

What future bliss He gives not thee to know,
But gives that hope to be thy blessing now.
Hope springs eternal in the human breast;
Man never is, but always to be, blessed.

The soul, uneasy, and confined from home,
Rests and expatiates on a life to come.

Lo, the poor Indian! whose untutored mind
Sees God in clouds, or hears him in the wind;
His soul proud science never taught to stray
Far as the solar walk, or milky way;
Yet simple nature to his soul hath given
Behind the cloud-topped hill, an humbler
Heaven —

Some safer world, in depth of woods embraced,

Some happier island in the watery waste,
Where slaves once more their native land behold,

No fiends torment, no Christians thirst for gold;

To be content his natural desire,
He asks no angel's wings, no seraph's fire,
But thinks, admitted to that equal sky,
His faithful dog shall bear him company."

As an example of his lyrics, *The Dying Christian to His Soul* is one of the best :

The Poetry of Dope

“Vital spark of heavenly flame,
Quit, oh! quit this mortal frame;
Trembling, hoping, lingering, flying —
Oh! the pain, the bliss of dying!
Cease, fond Nature, cease thy strife,
And let me languish into life.

Hark! they whisper; angels say,
Sister spirit, come away.
What is this absorbs me quite —
Steals my senses, shuts my sight,
Drowns my spirits, draws my breath?
Tell me, my soul, can this be death?

The world recedes, it disappears!
Heaven opens on my eyes; my ears
 With sounds seraphic ring;
Lend, lend your wings! I mount, I fly!
O Grave, where is thy victory?
 O Death, where is thy sting?”

Studies

1. Up to this time which has been the greatest literary age? Make a table showing in brief the chief characteristics of each age. Make another table showing graphically the comparative length of each age, representing the longest by a line one hundred units long. Each unit represents then a definite number of years. The lines for the other ages will be as many times the length of the unit as the number of years it represents is contained in the number of years in the age. Make a third table in which you represent in a similar manner the comparative value of the different ages as you estimate them.

2. The Age of Queen Anne and the Age of Elizabeth were both highly important. Write a comparison of the two, showing three points of marked difference between them.

3. Compare Swift, Addison, and Pope in respect to physique and character, and the quality of their writings.

4. Which is the Classic Age? Which is the Age of Romance? Why should they differ so?

5. Read the selections from *Gulliver's Travels* with the idea of determining whether Swift ever loses sight of the proportion he has established between reality and his people, little and great.

Studies

Does he reduce or enlarge everything in the same ratio that he does his men ?

6. Compare the style of one of the *De Coverley* papers with that of the selection from Swift.

7. What peculiarities can you discover in the structure of Pope's verse ?

Modern English Period

I. THE BEGINNINGS

1744-1780

Beginnings of the Modern School

Queen Anne died without issue, and by a previous agreement called the Act of Settlement, the Elector of Hanover, a small German principality, became king of England under the name of George I. He was a big German, fond of ease and quiet, unable to speak English and quite willing to allow Parliament and Horace Walpole to rule his kingdom if he were left to eat and sleep in peace. To this state of affairs may be attributed much gain in civil and religious liberty that came largely by means of the cabinet system of government which was inaugurated then and is still the method by which England is ruled.

George II was much like his father, though he was fluent enough with his broken English. He was a soldier and would have embroiled England in war had it not been for the restraining influence of his wife Caroline, who allowed herself to be guided by Walpole. His was a reign during which commercial interests expanded in every direction and England laid the foundation of her immense colonial possessions. It was at about the middle of the reign of the second George that the Age of Classicism may be said to end with the death of Pope. The canons he established were of course followed by many writers, but without his genius their works were lifeless formalism.

English Literature

Influences were already at work which in a few years ushered in the period of Modern English literature wherein the imagination again asserted itself, thought came to be considered before expression, nature resumed her sway and greater liberty was allowed in form.

The forty years following the death of Pope may be called a period of beginnings, of transition from old to new. Those years covered the remainder of the reign of George II and the first twenty years of his successor. George III prided himself upon his English birth and education, and influenced by the ambitious spirit of his mother, he early assumed the dictatorial habits of a king. Lord North, his prime minister, abetted the king in his desire for rulership while Parliament struggled against it. One of the direct results of the policy of Lord North and the arbitrary king was the loss of the American colonies after the trying years of the Revolution.

Edmund Burke The struggles in Parliament between the liberal-minded Commons and the Ministry developed the forensic powers of the disputants and oratory approached the climax of its influence. Edmund Burke ranks first among the orators of his day. His orations are more literary than oratorical and some of them that are read with great pleasure were excessively tiresome to their hearers.

A biographical sketch of him is given in Part Six,

Hume and Gibbon

page 147, while on page 161 of the same Part begins his speech *On Conciliation with America*.

Hume and Gibbon Philosophy was the subject of deep study and clear exposition, and history was written in polished literary form. David Hume, besides being a philosopher whose views startled the world by their skepticism, wrote a *History of England* distinguished by the ease and clearness of its style. Its partisan spirit, however, has spoiled it as a work of reference. The most noted historian of his time is Edward Gibbon, whose *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* is a masterly production, showing a vast amount of precise learning and written in most artistic style. The work is classic in diction and embodies all the coldness and lack of sympathy that characterize the school.

Dr. Samuel Johnson While Pope marked the highest point which classicism reached in poetry, it remained for this succeeding age to produce in Dr. Samuel Johnson the greatest writer of classic prose. His only faults of style are such as belong to his school. Addison is a recognized superior but that is because he emancipated himself from the trammels of classicism and so in reality was far in advance of his time.

Johnson, the son of a Lichfield bookseller, had good opportunities for education and when he entered Oxford he was remarkably well prepared for his course. But this he did not finish, pre-

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ferring to begin his own maintenance by teaching. The school he intended to conduct proved a failure and Johnson, twenty-eight years old at the time, went to London to begin his career as a writer. He was accompanied by one of his pupils, David Garrick, who afterwards became the foremost actor of his time.

In London Johnson had a long and discouraging conflict with adversity, and it was not till after the accession of George III in 1760 that he obtained a pension which permitted him to live in reasonable comfort. His years of drudgery had put him at the head of English men of letters and till his death he dictated the literary taste and style of his nation. With Reynolds the painter, he founded in 1764 the famous Literary Club of which Garrick, Burke, Goldsmith, Boswell, Fox, Gibbon, Adam Smith and Sheridan were members. It was of this club that Macaulay says: "The verdicts pronounced by this conclave on new books were speedily known over all London, and were sufficient to sell off a whole edition in a day, or to condemn the sheets to the service of the trunk maker and the pastry cook."

Dr. Johnson was a curious genius whose eccentricities are more famous than his writings. Macaulay says, "The memory of other authors is kept alive by their works, but the memory of Johnson keeps many of his works alive." But this remarkable personage would have been far

Samuel Johnson

less famous among us had it not been for an equally peculiar individual whose devotion to the great lexicographer gave us the first English biography that dealt with the character and home traits of its subject. James Boswell (1740-1795) seems to have been one of the silliest of men, whose great delight it was to parade his weakness and the contempt in which he was held by his associates. He must, however, have had more intellect than he was accredited with or he never could have written his *Life of Johnson*. His servile spirit is shown in the way he followed Johnson about, jotting down his sayings, describing his actions and detailing the events of his life.

To Macaulay we can appeal for a summing up of the oddities that have made Johnson an amusing figure to all time, but in reading the artful characterization it must not be forgotten that Johnson was a generous, charitable, sympathetic and affectionate man in spite of his rough and ill-considered remarks, and that most of his friends could forget the absurdities of his conduct in their admiration for his genius. Moreover, he was always a sufferer from bodily disease and a melancholy temperament, either of which would have destroyed the courage of an ordinary man. In his case they account for the twitching limbs and peculiar actions that astonished every stranger who met him :

English Literature

“Johnson grown old, Johnson in the fulness of his fame and in the enjoyment of a competent fortune, is better known to us than any other man in history. Everything about him—his coat, his wig, his figure, his face, his scrofula, his St. Vitus’s dance, his rolling walk, his blinking eye, the outward signs which too clearly marked his approbation of his dinner, his insatiable appetite for fish-sauce and veal-pie with plums, his inextinguishable thirst for tea, his trick of touching the posts as he walked, his mysterious practice of treasuring up scraps of orange-peel, his morning slumbers, his midnight disputations, his contortions, his mutterings, his gruntings, his puffings, his vigorous, acute, and ready eloquence, his sarcastic wit, his vehemence, his insolence, his fits of tempestuous rage, his queer inmates—old Mr. Levett and blind Mrs. Williams, the cat Hodge, and the negro Frank—all are as familiar to us as the objects by which we have been surrounded from childhood.”

He was more effective as a talker than as a writer, though sometimes in his conversation he would drop back into the stilted formalism that characterizes his prose.

The *Rambler* and the *Idler* were periodicals somewhat like the *Spectator* but they were so pon-

Samuel Johnson

derous in style and so frequently pessimistic in tone that they were not very popular. His greatest fame rests upon his *Dictionary* which was the labor of years and is worthy of its author. Though not a skilled philologist, his definitions were so characteristic of himself and his illustrations so aptly drawn from great writers, that the book deserved the popularity the first great dictionary of a language would naturally attain. His definitions are sometimes very amusing and much more difficult to understand than the word itself. For instance :

“*Lexicographer*: A writer of Dictionaries, a harmless drudge that busies himself in tracing the origin and detailing the significance of words.

“*Network*: Anything reticulated or decussated at equal distance with interstices between the intersections.

“*Oats*: A grain which in England is generally given to horses, but in Scotland supports the people.

“*Pensioner*: A slave of State hired by a stipend to obey his master.”

His dictionary was the result of a great deal of hard labor, most of it performed without any considerable assistance or encouragement. When it was nearly completed he heard that Lord Chesterfield had written two very complimentary papers

English Literature

on the work. This but served to irritate the great author who had at one time hoped for some more substantial recognition from the Earl. Johnson may not have been right in his contention, but Chesterfield's action served to call out a letter which is an example of clear and dignified prose, free from the pedantry and heaviness that so commonly characterize Johnson's style. This letter Carlyle called "the far-famed blast of doom, proclaiming into the ear of Lord Chesterfield, and through him of the listening world, that patronage should be no more." Johnson accounts for the letter as follows: "After making great professions, he had for many years taken no notice of me; but when my *Dictionary* was coming out he fell a scribbling in *The World* about it. Upon which I wrote him a letter expressed in civil terms but such as might show him that I did not mind what he said or wrote, and that I had done with him." Here is the letter:

February 7, 1755.

To the Earl of Chesterfield:

My Lord,—I have been lately informed by the proprietor of *The World* that two papers, in which my "Dictionary" is recommended to the public, were written by your lordship. To be so distinguished is an honor which, being very little accustomed to favors from the great, I know not well how to

Samuel Johnson

receive, or in what terms to acknowledge.

When, upon some slight encouragement, I first visited your lordship, I was overpowered, like the rest of mankind, by the enchantment of your address, and could not forbear to wish that I might boast myself *le vainqueur du vainqueur de la terre*¹—that I might obtain that regard for which I saw the world contending; but I found my attendance so little encouraged that neither pride nor modesty would suffer me to continue it. When I had once addressed your lordship in public, I had exhausted all the arts of pleasing which a retired and uncourtly scholar can possess. I had done all that I could, and no man is well pleased to have his all neglected, be it ever so little.

Seven years, my lord, have now passed since I waited in your outward rooms and was repulsed from your door; during which time I have been pushing on my work through difficulties of which it is useless to complain, and have brought it at last to the verge of publication without one act of assistance, one word of encouragement, and one smile of favor. Such treatment I did not expect, for I never had a patron before.

1. The conqueror of the conqueror of the world.

English Literature

The shepherd in Virgil grew at last acquainted with Love, and found him a native of the rocks.

Is not a patron, my lord, one who looks with unconcern on a man struggling for life in the water, and when he has reached the ground encumbers him with help ? The notice which you have been pleased to take of my labors, had it been early, had been kind ; but it has been delayed till I am indifferent, and cannot enjoy it ; till I am solitary, and cannot impart it ; till I am known, and do not want it. I hope it is no very cynical asperity not to confess obligations where no benefit has been received, or to be unwilling that the public should consider me as owing that to a patron which Providence has enabled me to do for myself.

Having carried on my work thus far, with so little obligation to any favorer of learning, I shall not be disappointed though I should conclude it, should less be possible, with less ; for I have been long wakened from that dream of hope in which I once boasted myself with so much exultation, my lord.

Your lordship's most humble, most obedient
servant,

Sam. Johnson.

Samuel Johnson

A paragraph from his introduction to his *Dictionary* and another from his *Journey to the Western Isles* will give an idea of his usual style :

“ In this work, when it shall be found that much is omitted, let it not be forgotten that much likewise is performed; and though no book was ever spared out of tenderness to the author, and the world is little solicitous to know whence proceeded the faults of that which it condemns, yet it may gratify curiosity to inform it, that the English Dictionary was written with little assistance of the learned, and without any patronage of the great; not in the soft obscurities of retirement, or under the shelter of academic bowers, but amid inconvenience and distraction, in sickness and in sorrow. It may repress the triumph of malignant criticism to observe, that if our language is not here fully displayed, I have only failed in an attempt which no human powers have hitherto completed. If the lexicons of ancient tongues, now immutably fixed, and comprised in a few volumes, be yet, after the toil of successive ages, inadequate and delusive; if the aggregated knowledge, and co-operating diligence of the Italian academicians did not secure them from the censure of Beni; if the embodied critics of France, when

English Literature

fifty years had been spent upon their work, were obliged to change its economy, and give their second edition another form, I may surely be contented without the praise of perfection, which if I could obtain in this gloom of solitude, what would it avail me? I have protracted my work till most of those whom I wished to please have sunk into the grave, and success and miscarriage are empty sounds. I therefore dismiss it with frigid tranquillity, having little to fear or hope from censure or from praise."

"We are now treading that illustrious island which was once the luminary of the Caledonian regions, whence savage clans and roving barbarians derived the benefits of knowledge and the blessing of religion. To abstract the mind from all local emotion would be impossible if it were endeavored, and would be foolish if it were possible. Whatever withdraws us from the power of our senses, whatever makes the past, the distant, or the future predominate over the present, advances us in the dignity of thinking beings. Far from me and my friends be such frigid philosophy as may conduct us indifferent and unmoved over any ground which has been dignified by wisdom, bravery or vir-

The Novel

tue. The man is little to be envied whose patriotism would not gain force on the plain of Marathon, or whose piety would not grow warmer among the ruins of Iona."

THE NOVEL

On page 230 of Part II is a brief note on the history of the novel, but as we reach the age of Samuel Richardson, Henry Fielding and Oliver Goldsmith the subject should be more fully treated. Story telling in some form or other has always been a part of literature. In Mediæval times the great majority of stories were romances dealing with impossible feats of impossible beings or with improbabilities and supernatural events which it now seems only the very ignorant could believe. Of this character were most of the early English romances which, moreover, were usually of French origin. The heroes at the siege of Troy, Alexander the Great, Charlemagne and his Peers, King Arthur and the Knights of his Round Table were nuclei around which were woven an infinitude of exciting adventures and marvelous achievements. For one of these knights to pick up and ride away with his own decapitated head is no more improbable than the magic belt which guards his opponent or the remarkable enchantments against which both contestants struggled. In the sixteenth century the romance turned away from mere stories of knightly courage and intro-

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duced its readers to bits of philosophy and curious knowledge as in Lyly's *Euphues*, or to pastoral scenes as in Sidney's *Arcadia*. Thomas Nash by his *Unfortunate Traveler* introduced the story of adventure which dealt with more normal beings but in which the plot depended largely upon the tricks of a rascal, Jacke Wilton. As some of the incidents of these later novels were drawn from real life the way was being paved for more reasonable stories in which commonplace human beings could live in natural ways. In 1719 Daniel Defoe printed *Robinson Crusoe*, of which mention was made on page 23. This story was thoroughly natural and may be considered in that respect the prototype of the modern novel.

When Samuel Richardson had reached middle life he was asked by his publishers to prepare for country customers a book on letter writing which would be useful to those who did not have opportunity to study suitable forms. It occurred to him to link his letters together, and from this idea grew *Pamela*, his first great novel. Pamela is a servant girl and her struggle to be virtuous is told in her letters, and those of other characters in the book. The plot develops slowly and with a minuteness of detail that seems now to be very tiresome, though in that age when there was so little to read it did not prevent the book from becoming popular. *Clarissa*

Henry Fielding

Harlowe and *Sir Charles Grandison* followed the same general plan. In *Pamela* he deals with the lower classes; in *Clarissa Harlowe*, which is usually regarded as his strongest work, he tells the tragic story of a young lady who falls a victim to the treachery of Lovelace, whom he paints as a man of fine talents but most profligate character; in *Sir Charles Grandison* he depicts the perfection of moral and intellectual culture in a nobleman possessing all the graces and accomplishments a fertile imagination could construct.

Henry Fielding These novels, so new in plan and didactic in style, so full of delicate sensibility and fastidious morality that pleased and flattered the ladies, roused the antagonism of Henry Fielding, a gay, rollicking fellow of extravagant habits, who set about to repair his broken fortunes by ridiculing the novels of Richardson.

Fielding's first work was *Joseph Andrews* and it caricatured powerfully the timidity and sentimental fastidiousness, as well as the didactic style of *Pamela*. His success in this led him in time to write *Tom Jones*, his masterpiece and the one incomparable novel of the age. The management of the plot is so skillful, the characters so real and so natural under most trying circumstances, his style so fresh and exhilarating, his wit so keen and his satire so biting, that even now we forgive the coarseness and vulgarity of his characters, which

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were on a level with the loose morality of the age.

Tobias
Smollett At about the same time Smollett was growing famous by the success of *Roderick Random*, his first novel and perhaps the most personal tale in that many of its incidents are drawn from the author's own life. He wrote also *Peregrine Pickle*, and *Humphrey Clinker*, the last being the most humorous and genial in its tone.

Laurence
Sterne Laurence Sterne, an eccentric character whose private life was not exactly what would be expected of a man who held one of the rich livings of the church, was another contributor to early fiction. His *Tristram Shandy*, fresh and unique in style, satisfied the taste of the people and enabled the author to enjoy his passion for flattery and intrigue in the gay society of London and the continent. Here he accumulated the materials for his *Sentimental Journey*, a delightful book and partial sequel to *Tristram Shandy*.

Fielding, Smollett, and Sterne may be said to have created the modern novel and widely as they differed in style and in manner of handling their plots, there was yet a similarity in type sufficient to separate them from other writers and unite them as genuine English novelists, whose work has affected the style of most of their successors. To be sure, modern fiction has entered many new departments, but rarely has it exceeded the skill-

Oliver Goldsmith

fulness in handling of plot or the excellence of character analysis and character portrayal that appeared in the novels of this epoch.

Oliver Goldsmith There was one other novel written at this time which has doubtless been more widely read and more favorably known than any of the others we have mentioned. It was, moreover, written by a man in whom the modern spirit had made its most effective beginning and whose other work was of such high merit that he really stands at the head of the writers of the forty years following the death of Pope.

Such was Oliver Goldsmith, of whom a full account with selections from his writings is given in Part Fourteen, pages 213 and 268.

Studies

1. Characterize each of the four Georges who ruled as kings of England.
2. Find Macaulay's description of Boswell and read it in connection with the sketch of Johnson.
3. Why is Johnson's letter to Lord Chesterfield a noteworthy document? Is it a strong paper from a literary point of view? Contrast the social position which writers occupy to-day with that which they held in the time of Johnson.
4. Under what conditions was Johnson's *Dictionary* written and completed?
5. Compare the novels of Richardson and Fielding.
6. What kind of man was Goldsmith? What is his most famous poem? Find it and read it again. What was his great novel? How did it differ from preceding novels?

Modern English Period

II. THE ROMANTIC SCHOOL

1780-1837

The Romantic School

National
History

The year 1780 has been somewhat arbitrarily set to mark the time at which the Romantic School of Modern writers began to be the ruling power in English letters. George III had been for twenty years king of England. His obstinate nature and his unreasoning ambition to be the sole ruler of his great nation had brought about the war with the colonies. In this war England was not united in sentiment. King George had succeeded in his policy only after a most bitter struggle in which the eloquence of Pitt and Burke (see Part Six) had roused the masses to a sullen opposition that in time became too powerful to ignore, and peace had been made with the colonies upon terms the king could not endure.

The forty long years during which the self-willed old monarch held his throne after this, were years of most wonderful progress both in Europe and America. They saw the French people in Revolution overthrow forever the feudal system that had ground them into abject submission; they saw the rise of Napoleon, and England's war with France in which Nelson at Trafalgar destroyed Napoleon's hope of invading England; they saw Napoleon's return to power,

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his struggle with the allied nations and the final extinction of all his ambitions at Waterloo ; they saw, too, a second war with the United States, the war in which an independent maritime and commercial existence was secured by the western nation.

But it was not only in war and politics that the years were fertile in improvement. Liberty was secured to the press and the proceedings in Parliament were published with such criticism on governmental policy as editorial sense dictated ; the slave trade was abolished, hideous prison abuses were corrected and laws against debt and crime were made more humane and reasonable. Oxygen was discovered, gas began to be used for lighting purposes and the application of steam in manufacture and navigation brought wealth to the country. Manners and customs were necessarily changing with the times and at the close of this reign men were abandoning the showy and elaborate dress of colonial times and donning the soberer garb we now see them wearing.

For ten years before his death, George III was hopelessly insane and his son acted as regent. George IV was fifty-eight years old when his father died and his rule as king lasted for ten years only. It was no misfortune for England when he died in 1830, for he was a dissolute spendthrift of whom little good can be said. But the revulsion from the tyranny of George III carried the people

Literary Characteristics

safely through the reign of so worthless a king and the great advancement in religious and civil freedom and material prosperity showed that the time had passed when the nation could be ruled without its consent.

The son of George III, William IV, a bluff old sailor, reigned only seven years, but those seven years were vital. During this time the Reform Bill was passed, which extended the right of suffrage and made impossible the corrupt purchase of seats in Parliament. Once more Parliament became the representative of the people. Slavery was abolished throughout Great Britain and her colonies, and in the arts and sciences great advancement was made. If a person will compare England at the accession of George III with the England that Victoria found he will marvel at the contrast and be prepared for the wonderful achievements in the literary world during that same period.

Literary Characteristics The classic writers deified the intellect and suppressed the imagination. They found their inspiration in the city and among the artificialities of human life. The Romantic School in direct contrast drew their inspiration from nature, and the spiritual meaning of all that surrounded them became their study and their delight. The individuality of the poet was allowed full sway; to show the deep feelings and strong emotions that swept his being was no

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longer felt to be inartistic. Forms of expression became more varied and many classic rules were forgotten. That the writer should express the truth within him in language the people could understand and in such form that it would rouse their emotions was a cardinal principle.

As an outgrowth of this search for truth in the realm of nature, came the growing conviction of the real equality of man regardless of social distinctions. The farmer in his field, the laborer by the roadside, the artisan among his machines became the equal in the poetic mind of the king upon the throne. Public sentiment was touched by this spirit in its bards and no small portion of the growth of popular freedom should be attributed to the songs of the poets. While these men were in a sense the product of the age, yet their brilliant powers of imagination and their genuine enthusiasm made them leaders in the movements that inspired them. The romanticist cultivated his imagination and his intellect but bound neither by rigid rules. This genuineness was a return to the Elizabethan Age, a revival of the spirit that breathed in Shakespeare and his followers.

As a necessary consequence of this revulsion of feeling among literary men, the form of composition changed. Few prose writers of this Romantic Age survive as favorites in the public mind. Scott is still popular though even his romances seem to be losing some of their hold,

William Cowper

and the delightful essays of Charles Lamb are read where literature is taught but are not so widely known as their merit demands. On the other hand one has only to mention the names of Burns and Scott, of Coleridge and Wordsworth, of Byron, Shelley and Keats to indicate the marvelous quantity of exquisite verse that was produced in the less than sixty years assigned to this age.

William
Cowper In William Cowper (1731-1800) may be seen the transition from one period to the other, for his early writings are on classic models while in later days he had much of the ardor and imaginative spirit of the romanticists. His life was a pathetic one. It was a childhood of sensitive timidity, made miserable by bullying companions; a youth of retiring study and unhappy experiences; a manhood of despondency, temporary fits of insanity and helpless dependence upon his friends. He was always conscious of his weakness and never felt himself capable of doing anything in the world, yet his gentle disposition and winning ways brought him the love of many kindly and powerful friends. He was intensely religious by nature and yielded himself a devout believer, an unquestioning adherent to the doctrine of the day. Many of his hymns are still generally sung. "There is a fountain filled with blood" and "God moves in a mysterious way" have become household favorites.

The Task, his best known and most extended

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poem, was composed at the request of Lady Austen, one of his staunchest friends. It celebrates country pleasures and simple natural scenes as far more conducive to right ways of living than is the artificial life of the town. His lines *On the Receipt of My Mother's Picture out of Norfolk* are most beautiful and their pathos and gently affectionate tone make them beloved wherever they are read. He could be humorous, as his unrivaled letters and the *Diverting History of John Gilpin* bear witness.

To us, who have the advantage of knowing the work of his great successors, Cowper may not seem of superior rank, but if we compare him with those who had preceded, we appreciate more fully the delicacy of his touch and the power of his genius.

Robert
Burns

Robert Burns (1759-1796), for a brief account of whose life see Part Seven, page 139, was another leader in the Romantic movement, though in an entirely independent way; a leader in point of time and a leader by the marked originality of his genius. No one ever came nearer the great heart of humanity than did the Ayreshire ploughman whose intimate acquaintance with nature enabled him to create the matchless background against which he set off his human characteristics. He possessed an inimitable humor and a mastery of the musical elements in verse that made him a chief among the lyric poets.

The Lake Poets

The Lake Poets Robert Southey, Samuel T. Coleridge and William Wordsworth are usually known as the Lake Poets; of them Wordsworth was by far the greatest. Southey's contributions to poetry, though numerous, were of little worth, but his *Life of Nelson* and some other prose works are interesting and valuable.

Of Coleridge we have spoken at length in Part One, page 113.

Wordsworth's life and the canons of his art which are the principles of the school of Romantic poets are set forth at length in Part Eight, page 269. These sketches must be read thoughtfully in this connection if the student would have a clear and comprehensive knowledge of the age and its significance.

Charles Lamb Of the prose writers Charles Lamb, whose life and writings are treated in Part Three, page 73, is with one exception easily first. That one exception is Sir Walter Scott, great as a poet, great as a novelist, great as a man.

Sir Walter Scott Walter Scott was born in Edinburgh in 1771 of educated and accomplished parents. He was rather a sickly child. The first eight years of his life were spent in the country where he learned to read and acquired many of the tastes which dominated his life. He was educated in Edinburgh High School and College and took up the study of law. His health had improved so that he was able to study and work in-

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dustriously and in 1792 he was called to the bar.

But the law was not altogether to his taste. Literature had always fascinated him and his interest in the romances, the border legends and the ballads of his native land helped to keep him wavering in his career. For ten years he was practically undecided and it was not until 1805 that he formed a partnership with the Ballantynes in the publishing business. This partnership became the ruling influence in his life.

In 1797 he married the beautiful Miss Carpenter whom he had sought with all the ardor of his impetuous nature and who had delighted to tease him by capricious whims and wayward fancies. In a letter written some years later, Scott says : "Mrs. Scott's match and mine was of our own making and proceeded from the sincerest affection on both sides, which has rather increased than diminished during twelve years' marriage. But it was something short of love in all its forms, which I suspect people only *feel* once in their lives; folks who have been nearly drowned in bathing rarely venturing a second time out of their depth." This frank allusion to his first disappointment does not intimate that his married life was unhappy, for when in the midst of his other misfortunes his wife was taken away his grief was genuine and long-continued.

His earlier poems were ballads and lyrics and in 1803 he published three volumes of *Minstrelsy*

Sir Walter Scott

of the Scottish Border in which he collected the songs and ballads that had always delighted him. These led the way for *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*, a long narrative poem in six cantos, which became popular at once and showed him wherein lay his great power. The second stanza in the third canto is an oft-quoted passage :

“In peace, Love tunes the shepherd’s reed;
In war, he mounts the warrior’s steed;
In halls, in gay attire is seen;
In hamlets, dances on the green.
Love rules the court, the camp, the grove,
And men below, and saints above;
For love is heaven, and heaven is love.”

The first stanza of the last canto is a patriotic outburst as well known as it is inspiring :

“Breathes there the man, with soul so dead,
Who never to himself hath said,
This is my own, my native land?
Whose heart hath ne’er within him burned,
As home his footsteps he hath turned
From wandering on a foreign strand?
If such there breathe, go, mark him well;
For him no minstrel raptures swell;
High though his titles, proud his name,
Boundless his wealth as wish can claim,—
Despite his titles, power, and pelf,

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The wretch, concentered all in self,
Living, shall forfeit fair renown,
And, doubly dying, shall go down
To the vile dust from whence he sprung,
Unwept, unhonored, and unsung."

When he wrote *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*, Scott was living at Ashestiel, a beautiful country home not far from Edinburgh. Here he lived until 1812 and here he wrote most of his poems. He begins the first canto of *Marmion* with a description of his surroundings :

"November's sky is chill and drear,
November's leaf is red and sear ;
Late, gazing down the steepy linn
That hems our little garden in,
Low in its dark and narrow glen,
You scarce the rivulet might ken,
So thick the tangled greenwood grew,
So feeble trilled the streamlet through;
Now, murmuring hoarse, and frequent seen
Through bush and brier, no longer green,
An angry brook, it sweeps the glade,
Bawls over rock and wild cascade,
And, foaming brown with double speed,
Hurries its waters to the Tweed."

This was the happiest period of his life. He was holding public offices, the income from which

Sir Walter Scott

was sufficient to keep him in comfort and even luxury, he was rapidly becoming the most noted literary character in England and his new commercial venture promised well. He published *Marmion* in 1808 and *The Lady of the Lake* in 1810. *Marmion* is considered by many as his greatest poem, though it has never been so popular as *The Lady of the Lake*. The former, a stirring tale of the battle of Flodden Field, rings with the sound of martial music and burns with human passion and the fiery ardor of battling hosts. Where he caught the inspiration for these themes he tells us in the introduction to Canto III :

“Thus while I ape the measure wild
Of tales that charmed me yet a child,
Rude though they be, still with the chime
Return the thoughts of early time;
And feelings, roused in life's first day,
Glow in the line and prompt the lay.
Then rise those crags, that mountain tower,
Which charmed my fancy's waking hour.
Though no broad river swept along,
To claim, perchance, heroic song,
Though sighed no groves in summer gale,
To prompt of love a softer tale,
Though scarce a puny streamlet's speed
Claimed homage from a shepherd's reed,
Yet was poetic impulse given

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By the green hill and clear blue heaven.
It was a barren scene and wild,
Where naked cliffs were rudely piled,
But ever and anon between
Lay velvet tufts of loveliest green;
And well the lonely infant knew
Recesses where the wall-flower grew,
And honeysuckle loved to crawl
Up the low crag and ruined wall.
I deemed such nooks the sweetest shade
The sun in all its round surveyed;
And still I thought that shattered tower
The mightiest work of human power,
And marvelled as the aged hind
With some strange tale bewitched my mind
Of forayers, who with headlong force
Down from that strength had spurred their
horse,
Their southern rapine to renew
Far in the distant Cheviots blue,
And home returning, filled the hall
With revel, wassail-rout, and brawl.
Methought that still with trump and clang
The gateway's broken arches rang;
Methought grim features, seamed with scars,
Glared through the windows' rusty bars,
And ever, by the winter hearth,
Old tales I heard of woe or mirth,

Sir Walter Scott

Of lover's sleights, of ladies' charms,
Of witches' spells, of warriors' arms ;
Of patriot battles, won of old
By Wallace wight and Bruce the bold ;
Of later fields of feud and fight,
When, pouring from their Highland height,
The Scottish clans in headlong sway
Had swept the scarlet ranks away.
While stretched at length upon the floor,
Again I fought each combat o'er,
Pebbles and shell, in order laid,
The mimic ranks of war displayed ;
And onward still the Scottish Lion bore,
And still the scattered Southron fled before."

The poem contains many oft-quoted lines of which the following are examples :

"O what a tangled web we weave
When first we practice to deceive."

"O woman ! in our hours of ease,
Uncertain, coy, and hard to please,
And variable as the shade
By the light quivering aspen made ;
Where pain and anguish wring the brow
Administering angel thou !"

Lochinvar, Lady Heron's song in the Fifth Canto and the *Song* in the Third Canto are good examples of his lyric power.

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The Lady of the Lake was welcomed with the greatest enthusiasm and its merit justified the praise bestowed upon it. We have already printed in Part Eight, on pages 159 and 163, two of the lyrics from this poem. In Canto IV the harp of Allenbane, attuned to sacred minstrelsy, accompanies "Ellen, or an angel" while she sings this exquisite

Hymn to the Virgin

Ave Maria ! maiden mild !

Listen to a maiden's prayer !

Thou canst hear though from the wild,

Thou canst save amid despair.

Safe may we sleep beneath thy care,

Though banished, outcast, and reviled —

Maiden ! hear a maiden's prayer;

Mother, hear a suppliant child !

Ave Maria !

Ave Maria ! undefiled !

The flinty couch we now must share

Shall seem with down of eider piled,

If thy protection hover there.

The murky cavern's heavy air

Shall breathe of balm if thou hast smiled;

Then, Maiden ! hear a maiden's prayer,

Mother, list a suppliant child !

Ave Maria !

Sir Walter Scott

Ave Maria! stainless styled !

Foul demons of the earth and air,
From this their wonted haunt exiled,
Shall flee before thy presence fair.

We bow us to our lot of care,
Beneath thy guidance reconciled :
Hear for a maid a maiden's prayer,
And for a father hear a child !

Ave Maria!

Though further quotation seems unnecessary, for every student of literature will read the poems of Scott, yet we cannot refrain from giving the perfect song from the First Canto which Ellen

“ — — — sung, and still a harp unseen
Filled up the sympathy between.”

“Soldier, rest ! thy warfare o'er,
Sleep the sleep that knows not breaking ;
Dream of battle fields no more,
Days of danger, nights of waking.
In our isle's enchanted hall,
Hands unseen thy couch are strewing,
Fairy strains of music fall,
Every sense in slumber dewing.
Soldier, rest ! thy warfare o'er,
Dream of fighting fields no more ;

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Sleep the sleep that knows no breaking,
Morn of toil, nor night of waking.

“No rude sound shall reach thine ear,
Armor's clang or war-steed champing,
Trump nor pibroch summon here
Mustering clan or squadron tramping.
Yet the lark's shrill fife may come
At the daybreak from the fallow,
And the bittern sound his drum,
Booming from the sedgy shallow.
Ruder sounds shall none be near,
Guards nor warders challenge here,
Here's no war-steed's neigh and champing,
Shouting clans or squadrons stamping.

“Huntsman, rest! thy chase is done;
While our slumbrous spells assail ye,
Dream not, with the rising sun,
Bugles here shall sound reveillé.
Sleep! the deer is in his den;
Sleep! thy hounds are by thee lying:
Sleep! nor dream in yonder glen
How thy gallant steed lay dying.
Huntsman, rest! thy chase is done;
Think not of the rising sun,
For at dawning to assail ye
Here no bugles sound reveillé.”

Sir Walter Scott

The year after the publication of *The Lady of the Lake*, Scott purchased the estate of Abbotsford and began building the beautiful home that came to be one of the most famous places in Scotland or the United Kingdom. It is still preserved as nearly as possible in the exact condition in which Sir Walter left it. Its library, its fine collection of curios, its relics of the poet and his life there are all faithfully preserved and are viewed every year by thousands of tourists.

Waverley
Novels His venture with the publishing house of James Ballantyne & Co., which promised well at the beginning, soon became troublesome. The affairs of the company were miserably managed, and their extravagance in issuing so many publications brought bankruptcy very near them as early as 1814. But just then Scott published anonymously *Waverley*, the first of the series known as the *Waverley Novels*. Its success was wonderful and Scott saw in it the means for saving the failing business in which he had invested his capital. Moreover the popularity of *Waverley* gave him an opportunity to abandon without discredit the field of poetry in which, since the publication of Byron's *Childe Harold*, he saw himself no longer the brightest star.

To appreciate the fecundity of his genius and his tremendous power to work, we have only to think that in the ten years following he produced no less

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than twenty novels of great length and complexity of plot, and dealing with a multitude of historic incidents. *Guy Mannering*, *Old Mortality*, *Quentin Durward*, *The Talisman*, and above the rest, *Kenilworth*, *Ivanhoe* and *The Heart of Midlothian* are some of the titles that bring to the reader of romance the brightest recollections of keen enjoyment. No matter what the critics may say of historic inaccuracies, attenuated plots, prosy descriptions and unreal characters, the fact remains that no one has ever written such entertaining stories, so widely read and heartily enjoyed. Quotation from them would avail little in giving to the uninitiated an idea of their charms, and it is possible that to be a real Scott lover a person must begin his reading early in life. Still very few who read far enough to enter the portals of his plot, rest until they have passed entirely through.

The amount of money these stories brought in was unprecedented in literature, and sensible management would have saved the firm and given Scott the affluence his nature craved. But success seemed to make the management more reckless and unreasoning. However, the appearance of the new novels, one every six months with almost unvarying regularity, did tide the firm along until 1825 when the crash came and Scott saw himself bound in honor, though not legally, to an enormous debt of more than \$600,000. He made no effort to avoid the payment and within a few days

Sir Walter Scott

was at work with feverish energy to earn the immense sum with his pen. He might have succeeded in doing this, and in fact did pay a large portion of the indebtedness. But his labors were too incessant, the demands he made upon himself too strong. For five years he continued to write, though often warned by his failing powers that he was only hastening his end. Yet he worked away pathetically at his stories long after he was compelled to dictate because he could not hold a pen and until apoplexy made him wholly helpless. He was not unconscious of his waning powers nor of the inevitable consequences of his overwork, as he showed when he wrote in his diary : "The blow is a stunning one, I suppose, for I scarcely feel it. It is singular but it comes with as little surprise as if I had a remedy ready : yet God knows I am at sea, in the dark, and the vessel leaky, I think, into the bargain."

The nation sympathized with him and, urged by his friends, he went to the continent in a vessel the government furnished. A winter along the Mediterranean seemed to help him, but as he started homeward his strength began to fail, and when he reached his beloved Abbotsford he was too ill to do more than recognize the friends and servants who came to greet him. Lockhart, his son-in-law and most graphic biographer, says that shortly before death Sir Walter turned and said—"I may have but a minute to speak to you, my dear ;

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be a good man—be virtuous,—be religious,—be a good man. Nothing else will give you any comfort when you come to lie here.” These were nearly his last words though he lived for several days in stupor. By the aid of friends Abbotsford had been saved to the family as Scott knew, so that when on the 21st of September, 1832, the end came, he died a free man. “It was a beautiful day,” says Lockhart, “so warm that every window was wide open—and so perfectly still that the sound of all others most delicious to his ear, the gentle ripple of the Tweed over its pebbles was distinctly audible as we knelt around the bed and his eldest son kissed and closed his eyes.”

He was laid to rest in Dryburgh Abbey, formerly owned by his ancestors. “The day was dark and lowering, and the wind high. The wide enclosure at the abbey of Dryburgh was thronged with old and young; and when the coffin was taken from the hearse, and again laid on the shoulders of the afflicted serving-men, one deep sob burst from a thousand throats.”

In spite of his sickly boyhood Scott grew into a tall and well-formed man. He was always a little lame but not so much as to be seriously inconvenienced. His hair and even his eyebrows and lashes were light and became quite gray before he passed middle life. His blue eyes were shrewd and penetrating and gave when he was interested

Sir Walter Scott

a brightness to a face that was usually somewhat dull in expression. His forehead was high, his nose short and his mouth large, with a long upper lip. It was a face indicating good sense and often beaming with a kindly smile that made him hosts of friends.

His laborious life shows the dominant force of his character, but nothing has been said of his courtly hospitality to the hundreds of people who came, many of them great distances, to see him, and whom he entertained as generously as though they were friends of a lifetime. Nothing has been said of his entertaining conversation in which the treasures of his extraordinary memory were brought into view and enlivened by his ready wit and genial nature, which never permitted him to be unkind or caustic in his speech, however much the foibles of mankind might invite criticism. His was a nature full of love and sympathy. This was manifest not only in his veneration for the past and the achievements of his race, but also in his devotion to his relatives, his personal family and the servants of his household. Akin to this sentiment was his great fondness for animals which led him to surround himself with pets of all kinds and especially with dogs, for some of whom he had a fondness approaching that for his own family.

Scott's acquaintance with the great men of his time was extended and intimate. He saw Burns on his visit to Edinburgh, and was delighted when

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the elder poet gave him a look and a word in thanks for mentioning the author of a few lines that Burns had deeply admired. Wordsworth was a guest of Scott while the latter was writing *The Lay of the Last Minstrel* and the friendship then established remained cordial and intimate till the end of Scott's life. Southey was also a guest at Ashestiel, and Washington Irving, Thomas Moore and Henry Hallam were among the men who visited the author at Abbotsford. He and Byron exchanged gifts and each had a high regard for the genius of the other. Byron wrote: "I think that Scott is the only very successful genius that could be cited as being as generally beloved as a man as he is admired as an author; and, I must add, he deserves it; for he is so thoroughly good-natured, sincere, and honest that he disarms the envy and jealousy his extraordinary genius must excite."

It is difficult to say just what is the most prominent characteristic of Scott's writing. Perhaps it is the vigorous and rapid movement, the intense, fiery energy of prose and poetry alike. He was, it is true, a close observer of nature and to that insight he added the power to delineate in brilliant colors whatever he saw. He was dramatic, too, and made his characters speak and act their parts like men and women. Doubtless there are among the hundreds of persons who throng his pages many who can claim little as positive creations,

Sir Walter Scott

but Jeanie Deans and a few others are as certainly living realities. He was a devout admirer of woman and drew his love scenes with passionate intensity. However, he never lost himself in metaphysical by-ways nor had he the power of spiritual analysis. He was a story-teller, a romancer pure and simple, to whom the occult and supernatural were, if necessary, realities in the elaboration of his plots. He gave to the world a new literature and made for himself an imperishable name by writings so vivid and entertaining that the wisest have been charmed by them, and so pure in sentiment that he could truthfully say he had never written a line he wished to recall.

Studies

1. What was happening in America during the sixty years following 1780?

2. What noted reforms were accomplished in England during this period?

3. Contrast in form and substance the writings of the Romanticists with those of the age of Pope. What other age seems to resemble the Modern Age?

4. What are the chief merits in the poetry of Burns? Did his life affect the influence of his writings?

5. Who were the Lake Poets and why were they so called? Study the pictures of the Lake region and see if you can understand the influence these scenes had upon the poets who lived there.

6. Find what you can of the personal relations of Cowper, Burns, Coleridge, Southey and Wordsworth. Compare them in character, in personal appearance and in the quantity and excellence of their work.

7. What have you found in the writings of Lamb that would classify him among the Romanticists?

8. Study the map of England and locate the writers of this period.

9. What admirable traits can you find in the character of Sir Walter Scott? Do you find any of them reflected in his writings?

Lord Byron

Lord Byron could trace his ancestry in an unbroken line of nobility to the days of William the Conqueror. His father was a vicious spendthrift who ruined himself and his estate and then married an heiress whom he abandoned as soon as he had squandered her property. She was a passionate, half-crazed woman whose violent temper, intense pride and extravagant fondness led her to treat her son in the most outrageous fashion. Sometimes she was affectionate, again cruel and resentful; she petted him at one moment and sneered at his club foot in another. In forming any judgment of the poet these facts of his parentage and childhood should be remembered.

George Gordon was born in London, January 22, 1788. At the age of ten by the death of his cousin he became Lord Byron and removed with his mother from Aberdeen to Newstead Abbey, which had long been in the possession of the family. He was in school at Harrow from 1801 to 1805 and the master of that school says of his pupil: "I took my young disciple into my study and endeavored to bring him forward by inquiries as to his former amusements, employments, and associates, but I soon found that a wild mountain colt had been submitted to my management. But there was mind in his eye.

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His manner and temper soon convinced me that he might be led by a silken string to a point, rather than by a cable;—and on that principle I acted.”

In his *Childish Recollections*, Byron speaks of this Dr. Drury as

“The dear preceptor of my early days
The pride of science and the boast . . .
With him for years we searched the classic
page
And feared the master though we loved the
sage.”

At this school Byron was at first unpopular but finally became noted as a wide reader, as a leader in the athletic sports of the boys, and as the admired friend of many of his classmates. His own attachment to some of these boy friends he described in the poem quoted above.

He went to Trinity College, Cambridge, in 1805 and remained there two years. The mood in which he entered may be gathered from what he says: “When I first went up to College it was a new and heavy-hearted scene for me: firstly, I so much disliked leaving Harrow that, though it was time (I being seventeen), it broke my very rest for the last quarter with counting the days that remained. I always *hated* Harrow till the last year and a half, but then I liked it. Secondly, I wished to go to Oxford and not to Cambridge.

Lord Byron

Thirdly, I was so completely alone in this new world that it half broke my spirits. My companions were not unsocial, but the contrary — lively, hospitable, of rank and fortune and gay far beyond my gayety. I mingled with, and dined and supped, etc., with them; but, I know not how, it was one of the deadliest and heaviest feelings of my life to feel that I was no longer a boy."

Here his proud and aristocratic nature manifested itself in arrogant bearing and contemptuous manners, but he still was a leader in athletics and in the wilder dissipations of college and city life. He had no one to restrain him, he was wholly free to follow his own inclinations and had means to gratify his tastes. Small wonder that he gained little genuine good from his college career or that he left it without regret and possessed by a dislike for the University and its teachings.

His first volume of poems was published while he was at Cambridge. Among these poems was the stanza *Damaetas*, in which he described himself, or what he thought to be himself. It is a remarkable characteristic of Byron that his poetry usually embodies himself. His heroes are like himself, proud, cynical, wicked, doubters of everything from man's integrity and woman's virtue even to the wisdom and goodness of God. From this point of view this youthful stanza becomes interesting:

English Literature

“ In law an infant, and in years a boy,
In mind a slave to every vicious joy ;
From every sense of shame and virtue weaned ;
In lies an adept, in deceit a fiend ;
Versed in hypocrisy while yet a child ;
Fickle as wind, of inclinations wild ;
Woman his dupe, his heedless friend a tool ;
Old in the world, though scarcely broke from
school ;

Damaetas ran through all the maze of sin,
And found the goal where others just begin ;
And still conflicting passions shake his soul,
And bid him drain the dregs of pleasure's bowl,
But, paled with vice, he breaks the former
chain,

And what was once his bliss appears his bane.”

This first volume received from the critics and reviewers such scathing criticism that his fiery temper was roused and he wrote his *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*, a most bitter and intemperate satire hurled against literary men indiscriminately. Afterwards he admitted the injustice of many parts of it but his resentment never fully subsided. Some idea of the character of this poem may be gained from his criticisms of Scott, Wordsworth, and Coleridge :

“ Behold ! in various throngs the scribbling
crew,

Lord Byron

For notice eager, pass in long review:
 Each spurs his jaded Pegasus apace,
 And rhyme and blank maintain an equal race ;
 Sonnets on sonnets crowd, and ode on ode ;
 And tales of terror jostle on the road ;
 Immeasurable measures move along ;
 For simpering folly loves a varied song,
 To strange mysterious dullness still the friend,
 Admires the strain she cannot comprehend.
 Thus Lays of Minstrels—may they be the
 last !—

On half-strung harps whine mournful to the
 blast.

While mountain spirits prate to river sprites,
 That dames may listen to the sounds at nights ;
 And goblin brats, of Gilpin Horner's brood,
 Decoy young border-nobles through the wood,
 And skip at every step, Lord knows how high,
 And frighten foolish babes, the Lord knows
 why ;

While high-born ladies in their magic cell,
 Forbidden knights to read who cannot spell,
 Despatch a courier to a wizard's grave,
 And fight with honest men to shield a knave.

“Next view in state, proud prancing on his
 roan,
 The golden-crested haughty Marmion,

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Now forging scrolls, now foremost in the fight,
Not quite a felon, yet but half a knight,
The gibbet or the field prepared to grace ;
A mighty mixture of the great and base.
And thinkest thou, Scott ! by vain conceit
perchance

On public taste to foist thy stale romance,
Though Murray with his Miller may combine
To yield thy muse just half-a-crown per line ?
No ! when the sons of song descend to trade,
Their bays are sere, their former laurels fade,
Let such forego the poet's sacred name,
Who rack their brains for lucre, not for fame ;
Still for stern Mammon may they toil in vain !
And sadly gaze on gold they cannot gain !
Such be thy meed, such still the just reward
Of prostituted muse and hireling bard !
For this we spurn Apollo's venal son,
And bid a long "good night to Marmion."

"These are the themes that claim our plaudits now ;
These are the bards to whom the muse must
bow ;
While Milton, Dryden, Pope, alike forgot,
Resign their hallowed bays to Walter Scott."

Lord Byron

“Next comes the dull disciple of thy school,
That mild apostate from poetic rule,
The simple Wordsworth, framer of a lay
As soft as evening in his favorite May,
Who warns his friend “to shake off toil and
trouble

And quit his books, for fear of growing double;”
Who, both by precept and example, shows
That prose is verse, and verse is merely prose ;
Convincing all by demonstration plain,
Poetic souls delight in prose insane ;
And Christmas stories tortured into rhyme
Contain the essence of the truth sublime.
Thus, when he foretells the tale of Betty Foy,
The idiot mother of “an idiot boy ;”
A moon-struck, silly lad, who lost his way,
And, like his bard, confounded night with day ;
So close on each pathetic part he dwells,
And each adventure so sublimely tells,
That all who view the “idiot in his glory,”
Conceive the bard the hero of the story.

“Shall gentle Coleridge pass unnoticed here,
To turgid ode and timid stanza dear ?
Though themes of innocence amuse him best,
Yet still obscurity’s a welcome guest.
If Inspiration should her aid refuse
To him who takes a pixy for a muse,

English Literature

Yet none in lofty numbers can surpass
The bard who soars to elegize an ass.
So well the subject suits his noble mind,
He brays, the laureat of the long-eared kind."

Soon after the publication of this satire he went abroad and for two years traveled in Europe. During this time he gathered the material for the first two Cantos of *Childe Harold* which were published after his return to England. In 1812 he entered Parliament, but a few days before *Childe Harold* appeared from the press. Fame came to him at once. Moore says: "His fame had not to wait for any of the ordinary gradations, but seemed to spring up, like the palace of a fairy tale, in a night." He remained in England about four years, admired, petted and praised. "As for poets, I have seen all the best of my time and country; and though Burns had the most glorious eye imaginable, I never thought any of them could come up to an artist's notion of the character, except Byron. His countenance is a thing to dream of." Such was the verdict of Sir Walter Scott and it was accepted by all who saw the beautiful face of the young cynic. But his reckless and dissipated life and his indecent verses were undermining his popularity and preparing the public to turn against him. In 18 he married, and a year later, after the birth of a daughter, his wife left him and subsequently pro-

Lord Byron

cured a divorce. The real reason or immediate cause has never become known but there was doubtless justification enough in his immoral life. The people turned from him as suddenly as they had come to him and life in England became insupportable. Accordingly in 1816 he returned to the continent, never to revisit his native land.

He moved about from place to place, forming new friendships and continuing some old ones but in no way changing or improving his unhappy mode of life. Still it was the period in which his poetic genius reached its most brilliant point. He wrote a number of powerful dramas, several metrical romances and many miscellaneous poems. Of these, *The Dream*, written soon after his wife left him, recalls in beautiful verse an earlier love. *The Prisoner of Chillon* is one of the fine poems with which every one should have an acquaintance. The third and fourth Cantos of *Childe Harold* were written at this period. They are in more lofty tone than the earlier portions and show the growth of the poet's genius. From this poem we select two passages which are famous and beautiful; the first a wonderful picture of the battle of Waterloo, the second a solemn and majestic address to the ocean.

The Battle of Waterloo

There was a sound of revelry by night,
And Belgium's capital had gathered then
Her Beauty and her Chivalry, and bright
The lamps shone o'er fair women and brave
men ;

A thousand hearts beat happily ; and when
Music arose with its voluptuous swell,
Soft eyes looked love to eyes which spake
again,

And all went merry as a marriage bell ;
But hush ! hark ! a deep sound strikes like a
rising knell !

Did ye not hear it ? — No ; 'twas but the
wind,

Or the car rattling o'er the stony street ;
On with the dance ! let joy be unconfined ;
No sleep till morn, when Youth and Pleas-
ure meet

To chase the glowing Hours with flying
feet —

But, hark ! — that heavy sound breaks in
once more

As if the clouds its echo would repeat ;
And nearer, clearer, deadlier than before !

The Battle of Waterloo

Arm ! Arm ! it is—it is—the cannon's opening roar !

Within a windowed niche of that high hall
Sate Brunswick's fated chieftain ; he did
hear

That sound the first amidst the festival,
And caught its tone with Death's prophetic
ear.

And when they smiled because he deemed
it near,

His heart more truly knew that peal too
well

Which stretched his father on a bloody bier,
And roused the vengeance blood alone could
quell :

He rushed into the field, and, foremost, fighting, fell.

Ah ! then and there was hurrying to and
fro,

And gathering tears, and tremblings of distress,

And cheeks all pale, which but an hour ago
Blushed at the praise of their own loveliness ;

And there were sudden partings, such as
press

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The life from out young hearts, and choking
sighs

Which ne'er might be repeated ; who could
guess

If ever more should meet those mutual eyes,
Since upon night so sweet such awful morn
could rise !

And there was mounting in hot haste : the
steed,

The mustering squadron, and the clattering
car,

Went pouring forward with impetuous
speed,

And swiftly forming in the ranks of war ;

And the deep thunder peal on peal afar ;

And near, the beat of the alarming drum

Roused up the soldier ere the morning star ;

While thronged the citizens with terror
dumb,

Or whispering, with white lips — “ The foe !

They come ! They come ! ”

And wild and high the “ Cameron's gather-
ing ” rose !

The war-note of Lochiel, which Albyn's hills

Have heard, and heard, too, have her

Saxon foes : —

The Battle of Waterloo

How in the noon of night that pibroch
thrills,
Savage and shrill ! But with the breath
which fills
Their mountain-pipe, so fill the mountain-
eers
With the fierce native daring which instills
The stirring memory of a thousand years,
And Evan's, Donald's fame rings in each
clansman's ears !

And Ardennes waves above them her green
leaves,
Dewy with nature's tear-drops, as they pass,
Grieving, if aught inanimate e'er grieves,
Over the unreturning brave,— alas !
Ere evening to be trodden like the grass
Which now beneath them, but above shall
grow
In its next verdure, when this fiery mass
Of living valor, rolling on the foe
And burning with high hope, small moulder
cold and low.

Last noon beheld them full of lusty life,
Last eve in Beauty's circle proudly gay,
The midnight brought the signal-sound of
strife,

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The morn the marshalling in arms,—the
day
Battle's magnificently-stern array !
The thunder-clouds close o'er it, which
when rent
The earth is covered thick with other clay,
Which her own clay shall cover, heaped
and pent,
Rider and horse,—friend, foe,—in one red
burial blent.

Apostrophe to the Ocean

There is a pleasure in the pathless woods,
There is a rapture on the lonely shore,
There is society, where none intrudes,
By the deep Sea, and music in its roar;
I love not Man the less, but Nature more,
From these our interviews, in which I steal
From all I may be, or have been before,
To mingle with the Universe, and feel
What I can ne'er express, yet cannot all
conceal.

Roll on, thou deep and dark blue Ocean —
roll !

Ten thousand fleets sweep over thee in
vain ;

Man marks the earth with ruin — his
control

Stops with the shore ; — upon the watery
plain

The wrecks are all thy deed, nor doth
remain

A shadow of man's ravage, save his own,
When, for a moment, like a drop of rain,
He sinks into thy depths with bubbling
groan,

English Literature

Without a grave, unknelled, uncoffined, and
unknown.

His steps are not upon thy paths,—thy
fields
Are not a spoil for him,—thou dost arise
And shake him from thee ; the vile strength
he wields
For earth's destruction thou dost all
despise,
Spurning him from thy bosom to the skies,
And send'st him, shivering in thy playful
spray
And howling, to his Gods, where haply lies
His petty hope in some near port or bay,
And dashest him again to earth : — there let
him lay.

The armaments which thunderstrike the
walls
Of rock-built cities, bidding nations quake
And monarchs tremble in their capitals,
The oak leviathans, whose huge ribs make
Their clay creator the vain title take
Of lord of thee, and arbiter of war;
These are thy toys, and, as the snowy
flake,
They melt into thy yeast of waves, which
mar

Apostrophe to the Ocean

Alike the Armada's pride, or spoils of Trafalgar.

Thy shores are empires, changed in all save thee —

Assyria, Greece, Rome, Carthage, what are they ?

Thy waters washed them power while they were free,

And many a tyrant since ; their shores obey
The stranger, slave, or savage ; their decay
Has dried up realms to deserts : — not so
thou,

Unchangeable save to thy wild waves' play —

Time writes no wrinkle on thine azure brow —

Such as creation's dawn beheld, thou rollest
now.

Thou glorious mirror, where the Almighty's form

Glasses itself in tempests ; in all time,
Calm or convulsed — in breeze, or gale, or storm,

Icing the pole, or in the torrid clime
Dark-heaving ; — boundless, endless, and
sublime —

The image of Eternity — the throne

English Literature

Of the Invisible; even from out thy slime
The monsters of the deep are made; each
zone
Obeys thee; thou goest forth, dread, fathom-
less, alone.

And I have loved thee, Ocean! and my
joy
Of youthful sports was on thy breast to be
Borne, like thy bubbles, onward: from a
boy
I wantoned with thy breakers — they to me
Were a delight; and if the freshening sea
Made them a terror — 'twas a pleasing fear,
For I was as it were a child of thee,
And I trusted to thy billows far and near,
And laid my hand upon thy mane — as I do
here.

In August of 1823 Byron sailed for Greece. He had become deeply interested in the Greeks and thought to assist them in gaining their freedom. He was received with enthusiasm and he hoped to do something more than he had accomplished in literature, which he then seemed to think was not his profession. But in April of the next year he contracted a fever from exposure in a heavy storm and died ten days later. The Greeks would have buried him with honor but his body was finally embalmed and taken to England,

Lord Byron

where it was refused interment in Westminster Abbey.

E. P. Whipple offers this analysis of his character: "Denunciation and panegyric have both been lavished upon his name. Those who represent him as a fiend, darting, with a sort of diabolical instinct, on all that is bad and impious, and overthrowing, with a kind of diabolical energy, all that is good and holy, and those who represent him as little less than a saint, seem equally to err; and the error of both arises in a great degree from an attempt to delineate a character which shall be consistent with itself. Byron may almost be said to have had *no character at all*. Every attempt to bring his virtues or his vices within the boundaries of a theory, or to represent his conduct as guided by any predominant principle of good or evil, has been accomplished by blunders and perversions. His nature had no simplicity. He seems an embodied antithesis—a mass of contradictions—a collection of opposite frailties and powers. Such was the versatility of his mind and morals that it is hardly possible to discern the connection between the giddy goodness and the brilliant wickedness which he delighted to exhibit. His habit of mystification, or darkly hinting remorse for sins he never committed, of avowing virtues he never practiced, increases the difficulty."

The two following passages are taken from Macaulay's essay on *Lord Byron* and present a

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fair estimate of some literary defects, of the extreme popularity, and probable future influence of the poet :

“It is hardly too much to say that Lord Byron could exhibit only one man and only one woman — a man proud, moody, cynical, with defiance on his brow and misery in his heart, a scorner of his kind, implacable in revenge, yet capable of deep and strong affection; a woman all softness and gentleness, loving to caress and to be caressed, but capable of being transformed by passion into a tigress. Even these two characters — his only two characters — he could not exhibit dramatically. He exhibited them in the manner, not of Shakespeare, but of Clarendon. He analyzed them; he made them analyze themselves, but he did not make them show themselves. We are told, for example, in many lines of great force and spirit, that the speech of Lara was bitterly sarcastic, that he talked little of his travels, that if he was much questioned about them, his answers became short and his brow gloomy. But we have none of Lara’s sarcastic speeches or short answers. It is not thus that the great masters of human nature have portrayed human beings. Homer never tells us that Nestor loved to relate long stories about his youth. Shakespeare never tells us that in the mind of Iago everything that is beautiful and endearing was associated with some filthy and debasing idea. . . . Never had any writer so

Lord Byron

vast a command of the whole eloquence of *scorn, misanthropy, and despair*. That *Marah* was never dry. No art could sweeten, no draughts could exhaust, its perennial waters of bitterness. Never was there such a variety in monotony as that of Byron. From maniac laughter to piercing lamentation there was not a single note of human anguish of which he was not master. Year after year and month after month he continued to repeat that to be wretched is the destiny of all; that to be eminently wretched is the destiny of the eminent; that all the desires by which we are cursed lead alike to misery — if they are not gratified, to the misery of disappointment; if they are gratified, to the misery of satiety. There can be no doubt that this remarkable man owed the vast influence which he exercised over his contemporaries at least as much to his gloomy *egotism* as to the real power of his poetry. Among the large class of young persons whose reading is almost entirely confined to works of imagination the popularity of Lord Byron was unbounded. They bought pictures of him; they treasured up the smallest relics of him; they learned his poems by heart, and did their best to write like him, and to look like him. Many of them practiced at the glass in the hope of catching the curl of the upper lip and the scowl of the brow which appeared in some of his portraits. A few discarded their neck-cloths in imitation of their great leader. For some

English Literature

years the Minerva press sent forth no novel without a mysterious, unhappy, Lara-like peer. The number of hopeful undergraduates and medical students who became things of dark imaginings, on whom the freshness of the heart ceased to fall like dew, whose passions had consumed themselves to dust, and to whom the relief of tears was denied, passes all calculation. This was not the worst. There was created in the minds of many of these enthusiasts a pernicious and absurd association between intellectual power and moral depravity. From the poetry of Lord Byron they drew up a system of ethics, compounded of misanthropy and voluptuousness — a system in which the two great commandments were, to hate your neighbor and to love your neighbor's wife. This affectation has passed away, and a few more years will destroy whatever yet remains of the magical potency which once belonged to the name of Byron. To us he is still a man, young, noble and unhappy. To our children he will be merely a writer; and their impartial judgment will appoint his place among writers without regard to his rank or to his private history."

Byron's influence on the people and literature of his own land was unquestionably great but it was far greater on the continent. In France he was a power in bringing to the literature of that country the romantic spirit which was animating England; for Italy and southern Europe he was

Shelley and Keats

the apostle of freedom ; and in Germany, Poland and Russia his gloomy views and dark imaginings found ready foothold. No Englishman of his age was so widely known and so generously idolized.

His poetry bears the marks of his haste for he composed with furious rapidity when the spirit was on him. The greater part of his verse will die the death it deserves, but because of the astonishing influence he exerted as well as for some almost perfect lyrics he will continue to occupy a prominent position among the Romanticists.

Shelley and Keats Two more names belong to this epoch, two names that will be associated and that will be remembered with Byron because all had so much in common. Yet they were more finished in their art, more elegant in their tastes and promised the production of more exquisite verse. Shelley was only thirty years of age when he died, yet he is recognized as one of the greatest lyricists England has produced ; Keats died at twenty-five leaving behind him some immortal verse whose chief characteristics are its beauty and its melodious flow. Both of these writers are treated earlier in the course.

A sketch of Shelley's life will be found in Part Ten, page 273; his *Ode to a Skylark*, Part Seven, page 91; *The Cloud*, Part Eight, page 188; *Adonais*, Part Ten, page 153.

The biographical sketch of Keats is in Part Fourteen, page 255; his last sonnet, Part Ten,

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page 203; his *Ode on a Grecian Urn*, Part Thirteen, page 11, and the *Ode to Autumn*, Part Fourteen, page 257.

This age closes with the accession of Queen Victoria, though its influence is still a dominant one in our literature. Halleck says of it: "The age was preeminently poetic. The Elizabethan period alone excels it in the glory of its poetry. The subjects of verse in the Age of Romanticism were external nature and an ideal humanity. Cowper, Burns, Scott, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Byron, Shelley, and Keats constitute a group of nature poets that cannot be paralleled in English literature. The democratic spirit of the age is shown in the poetry of man. Burns sings of the Scotch peasant, Wordsworth pictures the life of shepherds and dalesmen, Byron's lines ring with the cry of liberty, and Shelley immortalizes the dreams of a universal brotherhood of man."

Studies

1. What similarities can you discover in Byron and Burns?
2. What do you think of Byron's criticisms of Scott and Coleridge?
3. What were the personal relations of Keats and Shelley? Who wrote *Adonais*? Read it and see whether any portion might apply to the author as well as to the subject of the elegy.
4. Write a brief account of the life of Keats.
5. Who of the Romanticists of this epoch led happy lives? Who were dissipated and reckless, who poor and neglected, who rich and courted, who suffered in health, who lived lives above reproach?
6. Review the epoch, trying to put the men together so that you can associate them hereafter.
7. Compare this epoch with the preceding ones (a) in length of time; (b) in importance.
8. Review the different epochs and see whether you can say that the character of authors is as a general thing reflected in their writings.

Modern English Period

III. THE VICTORIAN AGE

1837 —

The Victorian Age

1837-

The
Progressive
Age

Since England's great queen assumed the reins of authority in 1837 the world has made more progress than during the preceding five hundred years. Every department of life and thought has been revolutionized. Close scientific investigation has come to be the ruling idea of the age, and from its activity have developed the marvelous forces that have changed the world. Though far from being a perfect world it is a better one than that which saw the American colonies freed from English rule and is infinitely superior to any that preceded. The spirit of progress has manifested itself in so many ways that one can enter no field without finding evidence of its presence. The best minds of the age no longer accept as truth all that their fathers believed, nor are they content with their present light. Everything is questioned, not in a skeptical spirit merely but with a determination to know the truth, no matter what the outcome may be. In the field of invention, in the domain of religion, in politics, in education and in literature, this spirit of inquiry has led to surprising results.

Inventions have multiplied in a way never before dreamed of. Steam has been applied to lighten our daily tasks, electricity lights our houses and

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our streets and propels our cars. The telegraph carries messages to distant lands, the telephone enables us to talk to far-away friends and the phonograph records whatever it hears and reproduces it as required.

But these mysterious, wonder-working machines are not alone the marvels of the age. No less wonderful are those great inventions which enable man to cultivate and harvest ten or a hundred acres, where to care for but one was possible before; and those by whose almost human skill cloth is woven with a rapidity that would startle the matrons of the days when the hand-loom alone was known. With these the catalogue of prodigies is only begun and the list could be continued interminably, for most of the things that enter largely into our activities or give largely to our comfort are products of this period or old inventions so greatly improved as to be almost unrecognizable.

While the age is thus intensely practical it has not, however, been less active in more theoretical and speculative lines. International relations have become closer, and although suspicion and jealousy still mark their councils, the great peoples have learned to deal with each other more fairly and in a less selfish and less greedy manner. Politics has become an art that verges on a science and the men interested in political matters are far more numerous and of a far more representative class than ever before.

Literature of the Victorian Age

Socially, too, the world is very different. The old lines are being blotted out and new ones are being drawn. Distinctions of birth and artificial barriers of caste are disappearing and a man is valued for what he is, rather than for what his ancestors have left him. A man can rise by virtue of his intellect and the integrity of his character, regardless of his coat-of-arms or lack of one.

Religious toleration has increased in a remarkable degree and the uncharitable discriminations of sect are not often made. Laying aside petty differences of creed, Christian people are uniting on the fundamental principles of human relationships and in reliance on a just and generous God. It is no longer felt that the dogmas of a creed are as essential as right living, and it is not of so much importance what a man believes as that he believes something and lives according to his beliefs.

Literature

Such an age must be prolific in literary accomplishment and the quantity of publication has never been approached in any other period. The quality of the writing has improved till the general level is much higher than ever before. There have been numberless writers who could express themselves in very attractive form and many in whom resided the true and genuine artistic spirit. The range of subjects treated has never been so wide and a whole host of new ideas has been brought into literature. These have found their most congenial home in essays,

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and the number of writers who have achieved distinction in this department is phenomenal. Some are delightfully light and pleasing in style, while others are thoughtful students of the most profound problems. Particularly in the field of literary criticism have the essayists been active, and their keen penetration, discriminating analysis and sympathetic interpretation have enabled us to enter easily into the delights of authors whose subtleties were too deep and whose expression too delicate for us to appreciate without assistance. Science has been made attractive by a series of great men whose powers of patient investigation have been no greater than their skill in literary expression. The depth and fervor of religious feeling have found vent in inspired words. What the essay has been to this age cannot yet be fully determined, but certainly its influence is not easily overestimated.

Historians have been numerous and have worked patiently and thoroughly in almost every field. They have studied the epochs upon which they wrote and have learned to be scientific and accurate, at the same time using their imagination to recreate the scenes of other days. Many of their books absorb the reader in an interest as intense as he ever felt in the perusal of a thrilling novel, and some of their pictures of strange peoples are painted in living colors. History, though still a record of facts, is now a record that charms as it

Literature of the Victorian Age

instructs. It is not confined, however, to mere narration; it deals with causes and results and traces out in a philosophical way the relationships of events.

The greatest advance in a literary way is in the domain of fiction. There have been more great novelists writing during the Victorian Age than in all others put together. What the drama was to the Elizabethan Age, the novel is to the Victorian Age. It has ceased to be written or read merely for amusement, and now is often a serious effort to portray phases of character, to develop a philosophy of life, to study a condition of society or some social problem, or to inspire and instruct. All this means that the novel has ceased to be a romantic tale, and has become a realistic narrative based upon a carefully constructed and well-arranged plot. Everyday events in the lives of everyday people, when pictured by the pen of an artist, are found to be more fascinating than the wild imaginings of the old romancers. Not much less than the influence of the novel is that of the short story, of which a multitude are poured forth every year through the medium of the many newspapers and magazines. Though the greater number of these appear valueless and some are really harmful, there are now and then some perfect gems of literary art.

In such an age of scientific research and practical application of its results, poetry of the purely

English Literature

imaginative type would not be expected in such quantity and of such fine merit as in an age when more of the people were dreamers. It is possible, however, for elegance of diction to unite with the practical, truth-loving spirit of the times and produce an artistic and at the same time didactic poetry as far removed from the monotony of some of Wordsworth's duller poems as it is from the sickly sentimentalism of another epoch. Lyric poetry has some of its fine examples in this age and the drama alone is seriously inferior to that of the Elizabethan epoch. A few great names there are and a multitude of lesser ones whose place in the great world of letters cannot be fixed with certainty till the years have given perspective to their work.

This brief summary of the times paves the way for the more detailed study of the men whose work is regarded greatest. So diversified has been the literary product and so numerous the excellent writers that it will be better to follow a classification than treat everything in a purely chronological order.

SCIENCE AND PHILOSOPHY

Greatest among his contemporaries was
Charles Darwin Charles Darwin (1809-1882) whose minute research, clear intellectual insight, and wonderful power of logical reasoning enabled him to propose and sustain theories of evolution and

Science and Philosophy

development that have changed the philosophy of the world. At first his views were greeted with intense hostility by religious men who saw in what he advocated the most direct contradiction of their traditional opinions. That "All organic beings have descended from some one primordial form into which life was first breathed" would seem to substitute natural causes for divine interference and thereby destroy the foundation of scriptural revelation. But, somewhat modified by the subsequent studies of other gifted men, his views are now generally accepted by most thinkers and the opposition that greeted his greatest works, the *Origin of Species* and *Descent of Man* has changed to an effort to adapt theological dogma to the principles of an approved science.

Herbert
Spencer

Herbert Spencer (1820-1895), the ablest of the evolutionist philosophers, constructed his system upon the same basis that Darwin used, but he carried the idea much further. He would show not only that have plants and animals grown and differentiated from one simple common ancestor, but that society, morality, and even religion have come about by the process of evolution.

Thomas
Huxley

Thomas Huxley (1825-1895) may be ranked as the scientist who has done the most to bring an understanding of the new theories to the people at large. By means of popular essays and lectures he caught the attention

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of many hearers, and the profound theories of his day became the subject of daily conversation in thousands of homes.

Effect of
Science
on Literature John Tyndall, Hugh Miller, John Stuart Mill and several others have thought, written and carried conviction to the minds of men. Considered as literature the work of these scientists and philosophers may never take the highest rank, but their influence upon literature has been so considerable that they rank as inspirers if not as creators. Both prose and poetry show the effect of the new light, but in a vastly different way. The prose writers accepted and advocated the scientific discoveries, or actively opposed them. Science was the subject under discussion. Fiction so far as it touched the subject at all did so in a way that brought out the struggle between the new and the old ideas and the triumph of the one was not more frequent than that of the other. It was the poet whose imagination was caught by the new theories and who often accepted them without discussion but with a keenness of insight that rarely led him into error. The poetry of the Victorian Age has not the lightsome gaiety of the earlier eras nor the plain simple acceptance of life as it appears upon the surface, that characterized the early Romanticists, but it often deals with the most serious problems of mind and soul, not always in a hopeful way. It is the influence of science, the influ-

Effect of Science on Literature

ence of patient investigation and logical deduction that has wrought this change. Speaking upon this point, E. C. Stedman in his *Victorian Poets* says: "It follows that, in any discussion of the recent era, the scientific movement which has engrossed men's thoughts, and so radically affected their spiritual and material lives, *assumes an importance equal to that of all other forces combined*. The time has been marked by a stress of *scientific* iconoclasm. Its bearing upon theology was long since perceived, and the so-called conflict of Science with Religion is now at its full height. Its bearing upon poetry, through antagonism to the traditional basis of poetic diction, imagery, and thought, has been less distinctly stated. The stress has been vaguely felt by the poets themselves, but they are not given to formulating their sensations in the polemical manner of those trained logicians, the churchmen; and the attitude of the latter has so occupied our regard that few have paused to consider the real cause of the technical excellence and spiritual barrenness common in the modern arts of letter and design. Yet it is impossible, when we once set about to look over the field of late English verse not to see a question of the relations between Poetry and Science pressing for consideration at every turn and outpost. . . . Every period, however original and creative, has a transitional aspect in its relation to the years before and after. In scien-

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tific iconoclasm, then, we have the most important of the symptoms which mark the recent era a transition period, and presently shall observe features in the structure and composition of its poetry which justify us in thus ranking it. The Victorian poets have flourished in an equatorial region of common sense and demonstrable knowledge. Thought has outlived its childhood, yet has not reached a growth from which experience and reason lead to visions more radiant than the early intuitions. The zone of youthful fancy excited by unquestioning acceptance of outward phenomena, is now well passed; the zone of cultured imagination is still beyond us. At present skepticism, analysis, scientific conquest, realism, scornful unrest; Apollo has left the heavens. The modern child knows more than the sage of antiquity."

HISTORY

From the many historians of the age it is difficult to select any one as the greatest. Their characteristics are so varied and the subjects they treat so different that there is little ground for comparison. Four names are, however, more prominent than others and each of these four in his own particular way surpasses the others.

James A. Froude (1818-1894) wrote a *History of England* which though sometimes inaccurate is regarded as one of the most interesting works on

History and Historians

the subject. The same may be said of his *Short Studies on Great Subjects*, a long series of entertaining and instructive essays.

Edward A. Freeman (1823-1892) excels in the carefulness and accuracy of his work, while he lacks to a considerable extent the power of interest. He wrote a great deal on many subjects, but his principal works are the *History of the Norman Conquest*, *History of the Saracens* and the *Growth of the English Constitution*.

Of quite another type is John Richard Green whose *History of the English People* is the best work of its kind. It is just what it claims to be, a history of the English *people*, and is written in an admirable style for general reading. He published, too, a *Short History of the English People*, a much briefer book constructed on the same lines. It is excellent for the general reader and all that is really necessary for the student who is not a specialist.

W. E. H. Lecky (1838-) has written among other important works a *History of European Morals* and *Rationalism in Europe*. As the titles indicate, the works are philosophical and deal with ideas rather than with events. The latter is perhaps his greatest work and its fairness of view, its tolerance, and at the same time its fearlessness make it one of the things no thinking man should leave unread. Its perusal marks an epoch in the intellectual growth of many a student.

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To this list should be added the name of T. B. Macaulay whose *History of England from the Accession of James II* places him easily among the foremost of English historians. Though a voluminous work, it covers but sixteen eventful years from 1685 to 1701. He made an exhaustive study of events and places before he wrote, and then produced a minute and carefully written narrative that often abounds in fascinating descriptions and exciting episodes which thrill the reader as do the imaginative creations of Scott in the novels Macaulay meant to rival. If the historian did not go deeply into the causes of things and was content with a superficial narrative, if he did allow his intense partisan spirit to bias his judgment, yet he wrote that which people will read and enjoy in spite of the criticisms of the more philosophical school. He was great, too, in other respects than as an historian, and as one of the really representative authors of the age he deserves a more extended notice in another connection.

ESSAYS

T. B. Thomas Babington Macaulay was born Macaulay in 1800 of a parentage that insured a careful bringing up, and to a position in life that made possible a liberal education. As a child he was remarkably precocious, with all his tastes inclining toward literary achievement. He was a

Thomas Babington Macaulay

voracious reader and before he was ten years of age had written histories and metrical romances with startling freedom and versatility. He was hasty in his work and much preferred writing something new to perfecting that which he had written. At Cambridge, which he entered at eighteen, he distinguished himself as a debater and as a wide reader, with keen appreciation of the more graceful forms of literary art. While he was in college his father met with such serious financial reverses that Macaulay abandoned the life of easy self-indulgence to which he had become accustomed and showed the sterling worth of his character by taking upon himself the care and support of the family.

It is a most admirable character that the great man shows. Laboring hard from early morning till late at night, leading at the same time a busy political life and one of studious literary retirement, he yet found time to earn the affectionate admiration of hosts of friends. Justin McCarthy says of him: "Absolutely without literary affectation, undepressed by early poverty, unspoiled by later and almost unequalled success, he was an independent, quiet, self-relying man, who, in all his noon of fame, found most happiness in the companionship and the sympathy of those he loved, and who, from first to last, was loved most tenderly by those who knew him best."

He was an active and influential member of

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Parliament, a member of the Cabinet and for four years in India the legal adviser of the governing council. It was not until 1841 that he was released from public life and was able to devote all his attention to his literary pursuits. His indefatigable labors at last wore him out : in 1852 he was stricken with disease ; and in 1859 died calmly and bravely, grieving only for the sorrow of those whom he left behind.

In addition to the successes of his political career, Macaulay achieved distinction as a writer of verse, an historian and an essayist. He cannot be called a great poet but his spirited ballads are still read and enjoyed by the young and by all who like simple, vigorous movement, clearness of thought and freedom of rhyme. He caught the manly, valorous spirit of the old Roman life and transferred it to his ringing verse. *How Horatius Kept the Bridge* and the other *Lays of Ancient Rome* will not be forgotten while boys love excitement and contest.

We have spoken of his *History of England* but the essays remain to be considered. It was his essay on *John Milton* that first caught the public attention, and though he subsequently felt that his judgment had changed in almost every particular, yet the essay still attracts us by its clear and forcible style, its evident sincerity and genuine feeling. This was written in 1825 and was the first of a large number of articles which he

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contributed to the *Edinburgh Review*. These essays are both historical and critical. Of the former may be mentioned those on *Hampden*, *Clive*, *Warren Hastings* and *Von Ranke*; of the latter class there are a number that discuss the most prominent English authors; *Milton*, *Byron*, *Addison* and *Bacon* are examples.

Macaulay was a wonderful talker and his speeches in Parliament were many times powerful enough to change the vote of that body. He never lacked for words and his eloquence in the off-hand speech of debate was as marked as in his more studied speeches. Declamatory style which marks the public speaker, repetitions for emphasis, long, sonorous and impressive sentences with skillful antitheses, vivid imagery and remarkable clearness are the marked characteristics of his speaking and his writing. Though he mingles his long and his short sentences so as to give some variety, yet there is a sameness to his style, a dead level of monotonous excellence that becomes wearisome at times. However, this seeming weakness does not detract from the power of some of those striking passages whose perfection of form is universally admitted.

Macaulay was a natural story-teller and occasionally he brought to his aid in his historic descriptions an imagination that may have colored facts a little, but this defect that makes his descriptions sometimes too strong, sometimes too

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weak, is rather the result of his natural desire to select salient characteristics and to make vivid impressions than of a failure to appreciate the truth. He says of his purpose in writing his history: "I shall not be satisfied unless I produce something which shall for a few days supersede the last fashionable novel on the table of young ladies."

Vividness of portrayal is characteristic of nearly all his prose. He "calls up our ancestors before us with all their peculiarities of language, manners and garb; shows us over their houses, seats us at their tables, rummages their old-fashioned wardrobes, explains the use of their ponderous furniture."

Most of the qualities of his style and the peculiarities of his temperament may be seen in the two following quotations:

PARALLEL BETWEEN MILTON AND DANTE

"We cannot, we think, better illustrate our opinion respecting our own great poet than by contrasting him with the father of Tuscan literature. The poetry of Milton differs from that of Dante as the hieroglyphics of Egypt differ from the picture writing of Mexico. The images which Dante employs speak for themselves; they stand simply for what they are. Those of Milton have a sig-

Thomas Babington Macaulay

nification which is often discernible only to the initiated. Their value depends less upon what they directly represent than on what they remotely suggest. However strange, however grotesque, may be the appearance which Dante undertakes to describe, he never shrinks from describing it. He gives us the shape, the color, the sound, the smell, the taste; he counts the numbers; he measures the size. . . . Now let us compare with the exact details of Dante the dim intimations of Milton. We will cite a few examples. The English poet has never thought of taking the measure of Satan. He gives us merely a vague idea of vast bulk. In one passage the fiend lies stretched out, huge in length, floating many a rood, equal in size to the earth-born enemies of Jove, or to the sea monster which the mariner takes for an island. When he addresses himself to battle against the guardian angels, he stands like Teneriffe or Atlas; his stature reaches the sky. Contrast with these descriptions the lines in which Dante has described the gigantic spectre of Nimrod: 'His face seemed to me to be as long and as broad as the ball of St. Peter's at Rome; and his other limbs were in proportion; so that the bank which concealed him

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from the waist downward, nevertheless showed so much of him that three tall Germans would in vain have attempted to reach to his hair.' We are sensible that we do no justice to the admirable style of the Florentine poet; but Mr. Cary's translation is not at hand, and our version, however rude, is sufficient to illustrate our meaning. Once more, compare the lazaret-house in the eleventh book of the *Paradise Lost* with the last ward of Malebolge, in Dante. Milton avoids the loathesome details, and takes refuge in indistinct but solemn and tremendous imagery: Despair hurrying from couch to couch to mock the wretches with his attendance; Death shaking his dart over them, but, in spite of supplications, delaying to strike. What says Dante? 'There was such a moan there as there would be if all the sick, who, between July and September, are in the hospitals of Valdichiana, and of the Tuscan swamps, and of Sardinia, were in one pit together; and such a stench was issuing forth as is wont to issue from decayed limbs.' . . . The poetry of these great men has, in a considerable degree, taken its character from their moral qualities. They are not egotists. They rarely obtrude their idiosyncrasies on their readers. They have nothing

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in common with those modern beggars for fame who extort a pittance from the compassion of the inexperienced by exposing the nakedness and sores of their minds. Yet it would be difficult to name two writers whose works have been more completely, though undesignedly, colored by their personal feelings. The character of Milton was peculiarly distinguished by loftiness of spirit; that of Dante by intensity of feeling. In every line of the *Divine Comedy* we discern the asperity which is produced by pride struggling with misery. There is perhaps no work in the world so deeply and uniformly sorrowful. The melancholy of Dante was no fantastic caprice. It was not, as far as at this distance of time can be judged, the effect of external circumstances. It was from within. . . . Milton was like Dante, a statesman and a lover; and, like Dante, he had been unfortunate in ambition and love. . . . But the strength of his mind overcame every calamity. Neither blindness, nor gout, nor age, nor penury, nor domestic afflictions, nor political disappointments, nor abuse, nor proscription, nor neglect, had power to disturb his sedate and majestic patience."

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A PORTRAIT OF BOSWELL

“Many of the greatest men that ever lived have written biography. Boswell was one of the smallest of men that ever lived, and he has beaten them all. He was, if we are to give any credit to his own account or to the united testimony of all who knew him, a man of the meanest and feeblest intellect. Johnson described him as a fellow who had missed his only chance of immortality by not having been alive when the *Dunciad* was written. Beauclerk used his name as a proverbial expression for a bore. He was the laughing stock of the whole of the brilliant society which has owed to him the greater part of its fame. He was always himself at the feet of some eminent man, and begging to be spit upon and trampled upon. . . . Everything that another man would have hidden, everything the publication of which would have made another man hang himself, was matter of gay and clamorous exultation to his weak and diseased mind. What silly things he said, what bitter retorts he provoked ; how at one place he was troubled with evil presentiments which came to nothing ; how at another place, on waking from a drunken doze, he read the

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prayer-book and took a hair of the dog that had bitten him; how he went to see men hanged, and came away maudlin; how he added £500 to the fortune of one of his babies, because he was not scared at Johnson's ugly face; . . . how his father, and the very wife of his bosom, laughed and fretted at his fooleries—all these things he proclaimed to the world, as if they had been subjects for pride and ostentatious rejoicing. All the caprices of his temper, all the illusions of his vanity, all his hypochondriacal whimses, all his castles in the air, he displayed with a cool self-complacency, a perfect unconsciousness that he was making a fool of himself, to which it is impossible to find a parallel in the whole history of mankind. That such a man should have written one of the best books in the world is strange enough. But this is not all. Many persons who have conducted themselves in active life, and whose conversation has indicated no superior powers of mind, have left us valuable works. Goldsmith was very justly described by one of his contemporaries as an inspired idiot, and by another as the being—

‘Who wrote like an angel, and talked like poor Poll.’

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“La Fontaine was in society a mere simpleton. His blunders would not come in amiss among the stories of Hierocles. But these men attained literary eminence in spite of their weaknesses. Boswell attained it by reason of his weaknesses. If he had not been a great fool he would never have been a great writer. . . . Of the talents which ordinarily raise men to eminence as writers, Boswell had absolutely none. There is not in all his books a single remark on his own literature, politics, religion, or society, which is not either commonplace or absurd. . . . His dissertations on hereditary gentility, on the slave trade and on the entailing of landed estates may serve as examples. To say that these passages are sophistical would be to pay them an extravagant compliment. They have no pretence to argument or even to meaning. He has reported innumerable observations made by himself in the course of conversation. Of these observations we do not remember one which is above the intellectual capacity of a boy of fifteen. He has printed many of his own letters, and in these letters he is always ranting or twaddling. Logic, eloquence, wit, taste, all those things which are generally considered as making a book valuable, were utterly want-

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ing to him. He had, indeed, a quick observation and retentive memory. These qualities if he had been a man of sense and virtue would scarcely of themselves have sufficed to make him conspicuous; but because he was a dunce, a parasite, a coxcomb, they have made him immortal."

Thomas Carlyle Thomas Carlyle is in almost complete contrast to his great rival. Carlyle was almost everything that Macaulay was not. He was never in politics or public life but lived in great seclusion; he was not cheerful, happy, or contented, but suffered from the gloom and misery of a lifelong dyspepsia; he was not affable and genial but irritable, quixotic, gruff and severe; he had little knowledge of real life and little practical common sense, but dwelt in an ideal world, passionate and alone.

He was a poor Scotch boy, timid and sensitive, who earned among his schoolmates the nickname of "Tom the Tearful"; he was a student of theology in the University of Edinburgh where he was a good scholar and an omnivorous reader; he was a teacher for two years but abandoned it because he "would prefer to perish in the ditch, if necessary, rather than continue living by such a trade." Unable to accept the creeds of the church he gave up the ministry, and in 1818 moved to Edinburgh where he began to study law, support-

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ing himself by teaching private pupils. It was a period of great gloom and despondency. In poor health, with an unassured future, and losing faith both in himself and his God, his sombre nature urged him to despair. This profound inner struggle left its impress upon his whole career. When at length the clouds were dispelled and through the gloom came the light of the faith that guided him again into confidence and loving relation with God and man, he had received the message which it was the purpose of his subsequent life to deliver to the world. His gospel is a gospel of work, a gospel of duty, self-denial and search for spiritual truth. Of course it must be delivered in Carlyle's own way with biting sarcasm and bitter contempt for those who lived in opposition to it. But delivered it was with the force of thunderbolts, though underneath the furious tumult of his passionate utterance breathed a spirit of divine love and infinite pity.

In 1826 he was married to Jane Welsh, a woman of keen intellect, not much inferior to his own. They were ardently attached to each other, though her temper was frequently aroused by his irritable nature and sarcastic utterances. She was able to reply in kind and their life was at times a stormy one. He buried himself in his work and gave up his own domestic happiness while he sacrificed hers. Yet they were well suited to each other and their love was not de-

Thomas Carlyle

stroyed by their constant bickerings. When but a few weeks after Carlyle's installation as rector of the University of Edinburgh, he received the news of his wife's sudden death, it was to him a blow from which he never recovered. His strength seemed to go and his life became a prolonged season of deepening gloom during which his physical powers gradually diminished till he died in 1881. He was buried in the unpretentious cemetery of the village of Ecclefechan, Scotland, where he was born. A pathetic utterance of his own gives a glimpse of his inner soul as he looked back at his unkindness: "Cherish what is dearest while you have it near you, and wait not till it is far away. Blind and deaf that we are; oh, think, if thou yet love anybody living, wait not till death sweep down the paltry little dust clouds and dissonances of the moment, and all be at last so mournfully clear and beautiful, when it is too late."

Sartor Resartus (The Tailor Mended) is his first book and one in which he shows his own vigorous personality. He had difficulty in finding a publisher and the book was not immediately successful, but he lived to see it widely read and in eager demand. Its chief thought is that man should learn to tear away the clothes, that is, the words and deeds of the human spirit, and get at the real verities that lie beneath. He satirizes the artificialities of life and urges men to earnestness and action.

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Heroes and Hero Worship is a series of six lectures which show how the world's great men have shaped its destiny. These lectures form a fascinating volume for serious readers and vividly set forth the influence of such men as Mohammed, Shakespeare, and Napoleon.

The French Revolution is not so much a history of the epoch treated as it is a series of brilliant pictures and poetic outbursts of deep feeling. If the reader is quite well acquainted with the course of events of that stirring period, he can read Carlyle appreciatingly and gather the lesson the great Scotch preacher has to teach, namely, that God sees through the hypocrisies of the age and that sooner or later all wrongdoing, national and private, will meet with justice and be punished to the uttermost.

His *Frederick the Great* is a heavy work of considerable length which shows vast research and much meditation during the thirteen years in which he was composing it.

His *Life and Letters of Cromwell*, which was the outgrowth of an ardent admiration for the great Protector, restored the Puritan hero to the place he had lost in the minds of his countrymen. *Past and Present*, with many essays contributed to current magazines, makes up the list of his most influential works.

As a writer Carlyle is not at first easy to read. He is so peculiar, so entirely himself and so dif-

Thomas Carlyle

ferent from every one else, so disrespectful towards the canons of good English that one is not willing to accept him as he is. His sentences often follow what seem to us the unnatural order of the German language; they are full of parentheses and rambling clauses and often are broken, abrupt and apparently incoherent. He uses words that are universally recognized as barbarisms, he makes strange and original compounds that fit his mood, and if in want of a term to express his exact meaning he manufactures it for the occasion. These are his natural weaknesses but they are so sincere and true to his nature that the reader learns to tolerate and even enjoy their rugged freshness. His style cannot be said to be smooth and melodious but it is earnest and even fiery, an engine of tremendous force. His words are like flashes of flame and when his soul is aroused they fall into phrases of great power and of wonderful brilliancy. The following sentence is quoted by Halleck as an illustration of his power in description. He is speaking of Daniel Webster: "the tanned complexion, that amorphous, crag-like face; the dull black eyes under their precipice of brows, like dull anthracite furnaces needing only to be blown, the mastiff-mouth, accurately closed."

Carlyle led in the introduction of German thought into England and became the most skillful interpreter of the mind of that most scientific of

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nations. He was peculiarly fitted for this both by the excellence of his German scholarship and the natural bent of his mind. The scientific trend of modern English literature may well justify the assertion that the Victorian is the age of German influence, as Shakespeare's time was that of Italian and Dryden's that of French influence. Carlyle was just as much German as English and his literary hero was Goethe, of whom he says: "Knowest thou no prophet, even in the vesture, environment, and dialect of this age? None to whom the Godlike had revealed itself through all the meanest and highest forms of the common; and by him prophetically revealed, in whose inspired melody, even in these rag-gathering and rag-burning days, Man's Life again begins, were it but afar off, to be divine? Knowest thou none such? I know him, and name him — *Goethe*."

As a literary critic he had a keen appreciation for everything his own style lacked and at times when his sympathetic soul was moved, he wrote in a more delicate and smoother style than usual. Witness this from his estimate of Burns: "We love Burns and we pity him; and love and pity are prone to magnify. Criticism, it is sometimes thought, should be a cold business; and we are not so sure of this; but, at all events, our concern with Burns is not exclusively that of critics. True and genial as his poetry must appear, it is not chiefly as a poet but as a man that he interests

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and affects us. He was often advised to write a tragedy ; time and means were not lent him for this ; but through life he enacted a tragedy, and one of the deepest. We question whether the world has since witnessed so utterly sad a scene ; whether Napoleon himself, left to brawl with Sir Hudson Lowe, and perish on his rock, ‘amid the melancholy main,’ presented to the reflecting mind such a ‘spectacle of pity and fear’ as did this intrinsically nobler, gentler and perhaps greater soul, wasting itself away in a hopeless struggle with base entanglements, which coiled closer and closer round him, till only death opened him an outlet. . . . To the ill-starred Burns was given the power of making man’s life more venerable, but that of wisely guiding his own was not given. Destiny—for so in our ignorance we must speak—his faults, the faults of others, proved too hard for him ; and that spirit, which might have soared could it but have walked, soon sank to the dust, its glorious faculties trodden under-foot in the blossom, and died, we may almost say, without ever having lived. And so kind and warm a soul ; so full of inborn riches, of love to all living and lifeless things !”

The following quotation will justify itself. It is Carlyle’s gospel of work :

“Blessed is he who has found his work ; let him ask no other blessedness. He has a work, a life-purpose ; he has found it and will

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follow it ! How, as a free-flowing channel, dug and torn by noble force through the sour mud-swamp of one's existence, like an ever-deepening river there, it runs and flows ; draining off the sour festering water gradually from the root of the remotest grass blade ; making, instead of pestilential swamp, a green fruitful meadow with its clear flowing stream. How blessed for the meadow itself, let the stream and its value be great or small. Labor is life ; from the inmost heart of the worker rises his God-given force, the sacred celestial life-essence, breathed into him by Almighty God ; from his inmost heart awakens him to all nobleness, to all knowledge, 'self-knowledge,' and much else, so soon as work fitly begins. Knowledge ! the knowledge that will hold good in working, cleave thou to that ; for Nature herself accredits that, says Yea to that. Properly thou hast no other knowledge but what thou hast got by working ; the rest is yet all an hypothesis of knowledge : a thing to be argued of in schools, a thing floating in the clouds in endless logic vortices, till we try it and fix it. Doubt, of whatever kind, can be ended by action alone. . . .

“Older than all preached gospels was this unpreached, inarticulate, but ineradicable,

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forever-enduring gospel : Work, and herein have well-being. Man, Son of Earth and of Heaven, lies there not, in the innermost heart of thee, a spirit of active method, a force for work ;—and burns like a painfully smouldering fire, giving thee no rest until thou unfold it, till thou write it down in beneficent facts around thee ! What is immethodic, waste, thou shalt make methodic, regulated, arable, obedient and productive to see. Wheresoever thou findest disorder, there is an eternal enemy ; attack him swiftly, subdue him ; make order of him ; the subject not of chaos, but of intelligence, divinity and thee ! The thistle that grows in thy path, dig it out that a blade of useful grass, a drop of nourishing milk, may grow there instead. The waste cotton-shrub, gather its waste white down, spin it, weave it ; that, in place of idle litter, there may be folded webs, and the naked skin of man be covered.

“But, above all, where thou findest ignorance, stupidity, brute-mindedness—attack it I say ; smite it wisely, unweariedly, and rest not while thou livest and it lives ; but smite, smite in the name of God ! The highest God, as I understand it, does audibly so command thee ; still audibly, if thou have ears

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to hear. He, even He, with his unspoken voice, is fuller than any Sinai thunders, or syllabled speech of whirlwinds ; for the silence of deep eternities, of worlds from beyond the morning-stars, does it not speak to thee ? The unborn ages ; the old Graves, with their long mouldering dust, the very tears that wetted it, now all dry — do not these speak to thee what ear hath not heard ? The deep death-kingdoms, the stars in their never-resting courses, all space and all time, proclaim it to see in continual silent admonition. Thou, too, if ever man should, shalt work while it is called to-day ; for the night cometh, wherein no man can work.

“All true work is sacred ; in all true work, were it but true hand-labor, there is something of divineness. Labor, wide as the earth, has its summit in heaven. Sweat of the brow ; and up from that to sweat of the brain, sweat of the heart ; which includes all Kepler calculations, Newton meditations, all sciences, all spoken epics, all acted heroism, martyrdom — up to that ‘agony of bloody sweat,’ which all men have called divine ! O brother, if this is not ‘worship,’ then I say, the more pity for worship ; for this is the noblest thing yet discovered under God’s sky.”

John Ruskin

**John
Ruskin** John Ruskin was another of the essayists of the Victorian Age, a sketch of whose life will be found in Part Three, page 139, and whose *Crown of Wild Olive* is printed in Part Three, page 111.

**Matthew
Arnold** Matthew Arnold (1822-1888), critic and poet, was the son of the famous Thomas Arnold, head master of the Rugby school for boys. Every one who has read *Tom Brown's School Days* knows the noble Dr. Arnold, and can believe that his son would have all the advantages that sound training and liberal education could give him. Matthew entered Oxford in 1841 and graduated in 1844. Thenceforth his was a busy life devoted to educational and literary pursuits. For twenty-five years he was connected with the British schools, acting as inspector, and for ten years of that time was professor of poetry at Oxford. He traveled and wrote in the interests of the schools and devoted much of his time to inspection and the humdrum work of reading examination papers. However much this drudgery weighed upon him he never allowed it to interfere with the happiness of his life nor with his devotion to his family. The editor of his letters says: "As we think of him, endearing traits of character come crowding on the memory,—his merry interest in his friends' concerns; his love of children; his kindness to animals; his absolute freedom from bitterness, rancor, and envy; his un-

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stinted admiration of beauty and cleverness. . . . He was pre-eminently a good man ; gentle, generous, enduring, laborious ; a devoted husband, a most tender father, and unfailing friend."

As a literary critic he ranks above Carlyle and Macaulay by virtue of the delicacy of his insight and the carefulness and minuteness of his analysis. His own standards were high and he had the power of seeing what was noblest and best in others. His *Essays in Criticism*, of which two volumes were published, contain most of the articles he published in that vein. In *Literature and Dogma* and *God and the Bible* he gives his ideas of religion and applies the higher criticism to religious writings. In his conclusions he rejects whatever is miraculous but upholds the teachings of Christ. He would not overthrow Christianity and believes it will survive, that those who throw it aside will accept it again when they know it better. His style is clear, classic and refined. He never leaves his readers in doubt and often enforces his meaning by happy expressions that fix themselves in the memory. He was an ardent advocate of culture in the broad sense of the term, that is : "total perfection by means of getting to know, on all matters that most concern us, the best which has been thought and said in the world."

The scholarly nature of his writings is such that they will probably not appeal deeply to the

Matthew Arnold

average reader but they will make a vivid impression on thinkers.

Though he probably cannot be ranked among the greatest poets, yet he wrote much that is characterized by depth of thought and pure classic form. His poetry belongs to that period of the century when science and dogmatic theology were contending for supremacy and is full of doubt and unrest. If he offers a creed at all it is one of duty and endurance with little faith in ultimate rejoicings. In *Sohrab and Rustum* he gives a narrative of Persian warfare in the stately form and with much of the noble simplicity of the old Greek epic. It is the most readable of his poems for beginners.

He visited America and lectured, returning to write in a spirit of kindly though sometimes severe criticism upon the hurry and extravagance of American life. He died suddenly at Liverpool in 1888, one of the most conspicuous literary men of his time, a man who had established himself as the exponent of the highest and best in life and who had lived as he had taught.

William M.
Thackeray

The list of great essayists is not complete without the name of William Makepeace Thackeray, though the greater part of his fame comes from his novels. His *English Humorists*, in which he sketches Swift, Addison, Steele, Fielding, Pope, Smollett, and others was a series of most amusing and entertaining lectures.

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The Four Georges gives a lifelike picture of England's four rulers and their courts, in four lectures all in a kindly satirical vein. His *Round-about Papers* are interesting bits of playful moralizing that were popular articles in the *Cornhill Magazine*.

Studies

1. Justify the epithet *progressive* as applied to the latest age of English history.

2. Give an account of any international transaction that has impressed you as showing a larger policy and more generous spirit in the politics of great nations.

Try to recall some book or sermon inspired by a feeling of broad religious toleration and contrast the spirit shown therein with that of the days of Henry the Eighth and Elizabeth.

Compare social conditions in the America of to-day with those of France just prior to the French Revolution.

3. Trace the growth and give the characteristics of the essay during this period.

4. Make plain the significance of the statement: "What the drama was to the Elizabethan Age, the novel is to the Victorian Age."

5. What would you expect the character of poetry to be in such an age? Indicate a possible development for the poetry of the future.

6. What was the central idea of the system of philosophy wrought out by Darwin, Spencer, Huxley, Mill and others?

7. Give in your own words the ideas you have gained from Stedman's account of the influence of the new scientific thought upon literature.

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8. Who were the last group of eminent historians before the Victorian Age?

Make an outline, giving chronologically the names and chief works of all the great historians of the Modern Period.

9. For the greater clearness that comes from contrast, compare the personality of Macaulay with that of Milton.

10. Do you find the ease and geniality and unusual clearness of Macaulay's style attractive?

11. Describe the remarkable combination of outward harshness and rugged strength, with the deep tenderness and delicate sympathy that characterized Carlyle.

12. It has been said that Carlyle's style is self-conscious and shows in its willful perversions of language and startling vividness an unjustifiable striving for effect—in short, a form of the artificiality that he himself condemns. Can you accept this criticism?

13. Give in your own words the thought in the last paragraph of the essay on *Work*.

14. Do you think this essay could have been written by one who did not see deeply and truly and who did not feel with a mighty earnestness?

Modern English Period

THE VICTORIAN AGE

(CONTINUED)

The Victorian Age

(Continued)

FICTION

Two names will always be associated in the literary history of the Victorian Age, those of Thackeray and Dickens. The biography of the latter will be found in Part Fourteen, page 262, but of the former little has as yet been said.

**William
M.
Thackeray** William Makepeace Thackeray was born in Calcutta, India, but was sent to England for his education. He studied at the Charter House School and at Trinity College, Cambridge, where he stayed but a year. He was a friend and good-natured rival of Dickens, to whom he formed a marked contrast in the character and manner of his work. Dickens attained his popularity much earlier and will always be more highly appreciated by the majority of readers. Both were satirical humorists, but they drew their material from different sources and treated it in a different manner. Dickens sought his characters among the poorer and lower classes while Thackeray found his among the titled and well-to-do. Dickens was positive, direct and masterful; Thackeray was vacillating and lacked energy and industry, was rather timid and retiring. The former

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delighted in the good and noble among his characters and drew their portraits with a loving hand. Though Thackeray was equally appreciative of the good, he thought there was little of it in the world and taught his lesson by satirizing the weaknesses and villainy he saw. Both were natural reformers but they worked in altogether different ways.

Vanity Fair was Thackeray's first success and by most critics is considered his masterpiece. It was a novel on a new plan and appeared first in monthly parts. It was not long in gaining popular approval and by the time its last number appeared its author had established himself in the public mind. *Vanity Fair* is the world of society with all its petty foibles, its greed for wealth and its mean truckling to titles and position. Becky Sharp is the chief character, a wonderful compound of shrewdness and lack of principle. She is a gay, pleasing and beautiful woman who intrigues shamelessly but with great tact and skill for wealth and position.

Many of Thackeray's characters, developed as they are in the slow process of their action in the story, have become living beings to a host of readers. Becky Sharp is no more skillfully drawn than is the courtly Colonel Newcome, for whose existence we shall always be indebted to *The Newcomes*, written about seven years after *Vanity Fair*. From the moment when we first see the old Colonel,

William Makepeace Thackeray

with his sprightly Tom, to the end when he answers "Adsum" at the last great roll-call, his simple-hearted goodness makes us love and venerate him. Perhaps superior to *The Newcomes* is *Henry Esmond*, a long and powerful historical novel of the time of Queen Anne, which introduces several of the literary characters of that brilliant age. *The Newcomes* is in a sense a sequel to *Pendennis*, which it surpasses in interest and excellence, and the *Virginians* is a rather weakly constructed and uninteresting sequel to *Henry Esmond*.

Thackeray's life was not an adventurous one but he was subjected to his share of trials and bore them unflinchingly. At the beginning of his career he had a comfortable fortune and an assured income which he speedily lost in speculation and unfortunate business ventures. When he faced the necessity of earning his own livelihood he did it bravely and went to the continent to study art. He did not accomplish anything notable in this line but he did acquire a considerable skill which he used many times for the amusement and gratification of his friends and in the illustration of some of his own writings. This was no more his vocation than was the law, to which he had devoted some time.

He was married in 1837 but after a very few years of happy domestic life, his wife lost her reason and was sent to a private asylum. At this time, grief-stricken at the loss of wife and

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home, he was writing for *Punch*, the British humorous paper, the drollest and most laughable sketches. He died in 1863 after rather a sad life for one who had given the world so much of pleasure.

Of a kindly and sympathetic nature, he was also religious, and faithful to the creeds of his youth. The evil he saw in the world did not seem to affect his sunny confidence in the ultimate triumph of righteousness. His serene spirit reflects itself in his writings and although he is at times bitterly satirical, yet he rails against those follies of mankind that grow from personal weakness and might be remedied. He does not satirize the irremediable. His style is graceful, clear and vigorous, going back for its model to the days of Addison and Steele. Halleck says: "Thackeray writes as a cultured, ideal, old gentleman may be imagined to talk to the young people, while he sits in his comfortable armchair in a corner by the fireplace. The charm of freshness, quaintness, and colloquial familiarity is seldom absent from the delightfully natural pages of Thackeray."

As an example of his sharp criticism and humorous way of reaching his point the following may be taken: "The profession of letters was ruined by that libel of the *Dunciad*. If authors were wretched and poor before, if some of them lived in hay lofts, of which their landladies kept the ladders, at least nobody came to disturb them

George Eliot

in their straw ; if three of them had but one coat between them, the two remained invisible in the garret, the third, at any rate, appeared decently at the coffee house and paid his two pence like a gentleman. It was Pope that dragged into light all this poverty and meanness, and held up those wretched shifts and rags to public ridicule. It was Pope that made generations of the reading world (delighted with the mischief, as who would not be that reads it) believe that author and wretch, author and rags, author and dirt, author and drink, gin, cowheel, trips, poverty, duns, bailiffs, squalling children, and clamorous landladies, were always associated together. The condition of authorship began to fall from the days of the *Dunciad*, and I believe in my heart that much of that obloquy which has since pursued our calling was occasioned by Pope's libels and wicked wit."

George Eliot Judged according to modern standards
the novels of George Eliot (Mary Ann

Evans) easily stand first. She is superior to both Thackeray and Dickens in her minute analysis and keen delineation of character, and is equally potent in the intensity of her plots. While not so full of wit and funny conceits as the two men, she is not devoid of humor and excels them in the power of her phrases. She is wholly unsurpassed in her ability to develop character under the reader's eyes. No more striking exam-

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ple of this is found in literature than Tito Melema, who, in the novel *Romola* grows from a promising youth to a wasted and criminal manhood. He comes to be what he is by the slow action of those immutable laws of psychological development of whose meaning she knew so much. In her later novels, she may have carried her analysis of character to excess, though there are many critics who rank *Middlemarch* as her best. *Adam Bede*, preceded only by the short stories in the *Scenes from Clerical Life*, was her first and still is her most popular novel. It is a bright, wholesome story of English life, in spite of its one painful feature. Many of the characters were drawn largely from her own family; Adam, Mrs. Poyser, and Dinah being deeply indebted to her father, mother and an aunt for the traits that make them admired. The *Mill on the Floss* is to a certain extent autobiographical, for the intense nature of Maggie Tulliver is the type of her own soul in her early life. We have said that *Romola* is the greatest of her novels, but the statement may be questioned by those who care more for the earnestness and truthfulness of her English pictures. But she paints her Florentine figures on a broad canvas, and for the purpose of showing us by the light of modern science the effect of the great struggle upon two persons like Romola and her lover, depicts most accurately those turbulent times when Florence was aroused to fury by the teachings of Savona-

George Eliot

rola. It was an ambitious proceeding, and the way in which she succeeded in her purpose justifies our classification of her novel. On the other hand, readers who admire an artistic setting, characters delicately drawn, and a harmonious rendering of a well-balanced plot, will classify *Silas Marner* as certainly one of her best works. The weaver of Raveloe and his golden-haired Eppie are poetic creations.

And now the woman who wrote these novels — what of her? She was born in 1819 and lived to be sixty-one years old. She was the daughter of a farmer and lived at her home till she was twenty-two. For the last six years of this time she had the entire charge of the farm and dairy, her mother having died. She was thirty years old when her father's death broke up the home in which they had lived after they left the farm. After some time spent in travel on the continent she went to London as assistant editor of the *Westminster Review*. Here she had every opportunity of making friends and soon became acquainted with most of the prominent literary characters of the time. Among those whom she met was George Henry Lewes, a brilliant man who exerted a powerful influence over her life and work. Although Lewes had an undivorced wife still living, George Eliot braved the criticisms of her friends and lived with him till his death. In spite of this strange alliance it is certain that the

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encouragement and sympathetic assistance of Lewes was a considerable factor in her success, if not the original cause of her entering the field as a novelist. He was tenderly considerate of her and saved her the annoyance of business relations with the publishers and the knowledge of many of the unfavorable criticisms passed upon her. She was never a very strong or self-reliant person and after the death of Mr. Lewes she married Mr. Cross, a man much her junior. She died soon after this and her husband prepared her biography and edited her letters.

She was a woman of plain appearance, lacking many of the graces that make her sex attractive, but from her precocious childhood she was marked by a superior intellect and great power to work. She studied zealously, even when burdened by the cares of her household, and prepared herself well for the arduous literary labors of later years. But contradictory as it may seem, she was never strong physically and for some years before her death was very frail and delicate.

Beginning life with a deep and ardent nature, she early fell under the religious influences that promised to make her a devout believer. But much thinking and personal study put her in such a state of mind that when she came to live among free-thinkers she zealously adopted their scepticism. Through years of various forms of unbelief she finally rejected the supernatural and based

George Eliot

her religious beliefs upon a generous toleration and the principles of brotherly love and service. Mr. Frederick Meyers, in a passage quoted by Painter, gives an eloquent account of her mature beliefs: "I remember how at Cambridge, I walked with her once in the Fellow's garden of Trinity on an evening of rainy May; and she, stirred somewhat beyond her wont, and taking as her text the three words which have so often been used as the inspiring trumpet call of men,—the words God, Immortality, Duty,—pronounced with terrible earnestness how inconceivable was the first, how unbelievable was the second, and yet how peremptory and absolute the third. Never, perhaps, have sterner accents affirmed the sovereignty of impersonal and unrecompensing Law. I listened and night fell, her grave majestic countenance turned toward me like a sibyl's in the gloom; it was as though she withdrew from my grasp, one by one, the two scrolls of promise, and left me the third only, awful with inevitable fates. And when we stood at length and parted, amid that columnar circuit of the forest trees, beneath the last twilight of starless skies, I seemed to be gazing like Titus at Jerusalem, on vacant seats and empty halls — on a sanctuary with no Presence to hallow it, and heaven left lonely of a God."

Minor
Novelists

Other novelists have written in this age, some with great skill and deep

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insight into human nature ; some have produced one really fine novel and done little else that was admirable ; others have written many entertaining books, none of which can ever rank high ; while still others have enjoyed the most surprising popularity for a few years and lived to see their fame dead and their books forgotten. But in these rushing days public taste does not discriminate closely, so that many authors have acquired a popularity often as satisfactory to themselves as greatness.

Among the minor novelists none is more entitled to recognition both on account of her faithful portrayals of life as she knew it and of the peculiar interest of her stories, than Charlotte Brontë, whose *Jane Eyre* has not lost the popularity that greeted its first appearance. The pathetic story of Miss Brontë's life is of no less interest to the student than her work. One of the remarkable facts of her literary history is that her genius surmounted the difficulties that surrounded it in its development.

Others who perhaps deserve more than the passing mention we are able to give them are Miss Muloch, or Dinah Maria Craik, whose *John Halifax* is a pure and interesting story of English life ; Charles Reade, a reformer in spirit, whose *The Cloister and the Hearth*, *Hard Cash*, and *It Is Never Too Late to Mend*, are thrilling and realistic ; Wilkie Collins, who wrote many novels,

Minor Novelists

of which *The Woman in White* and *The Moonstone* are among the best ; Edward Bulwer, Lord Lytton, who wrote *The Lady of Lyons* and *Richelieu*, two of the best modern dramas, and among many novels *The Last Days of Pompeii*, *The Last of the Barons*, and *Eugene Aram*, all very interesting and widely different in subject and manner of treatment ; Charles Kingsley, famous for *Hypatia* and *Westward Ho*, two fine historical novels ; Benjamin Disraeli, Earl of Beaconsfield, a noted statesman who wrote among others the somewhat heavy *Lothair* and *Coningsby* ; and Frederick Marryat, whose *Peter Simple*, *Mr. Midshipman Easy* and others are still the foremost sea tales. Besides these, Richard D. Blackmore's *Lorna Doone*, Thomas Hardy's *Far from the Madding Crowd*, William Black's *A Daughter of Heth*, and Mrs. Humphrey Ward's *Robert Elsmere* and her *Marcella* are worthy of mention.

Among the story tellers of this age, there are two others of whom more should be said : Rudyard Kipling who has already had extended notice in Part Two, page 223, and Robert Louis Stevenson, chief among the more modern romanticists. Stevenson's *Treasure Island* is a thrilling story of adventure, and *David Balfour*, *Kidnapped*, and *The Master of Ballantrae* are all fascinating tales. His essays of which the collection known as *Virginibus Puerisque* is probably the best, are marked by a most charming style in which humor

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and good sense blend so happily that the reading is a constant delight. But to treat him at length is to open the discussion of a school too new to be properly weighed, too important to be misunderstood, and so recent that it is rather beyond the scope of our plan.

POETRY

Alfred Tennyson The first and greatest of the Victorian poets is Lord Tennyson, of whose life and poetry we have spoken before (Part Two, page 167, and Part Nine, page 138) and from whom we have quoted many things which may be readily found by consulting the Index.

Robert Browning Next to him stands Robert Browning. He was born in 1812 near London and received his education from his father and from tutors, never himself going to an important school or college. He was a strong and healthy youth and man and lived an uneventful life devoted to music and poetry. He had little to disturb the serene monotony of his intellectual life except when sickness or death entered the family. He was married in 1846 to Elizabeth Barrett, several years his senior, and then possessing greater popularity than himself. Mrs. Browning's health was very delicate and most of their wedded life was spent in Italy, whose climate seemed more kindly to her. She died in 1861 and her loss was a severe blow to the poet. He resided in London

Robert Browning

thereafter and was prominent in social life, though frequently visiting the continent. He died at Venice in December, 1889.

Browning's genius was very productive and although he spent much time in revising and correcting, he poured forth a flood of poems of nearly every type. Few are easy reading, most of them are difficult and some entire poems and many passages in others are obscure or unintelligible. This, however, does not mean that he is uninteresting or that what he has written will not repay the reading. The dramatic intensity of some of his scenes, the lyric beauty of many passages and the force and elegance of his figures make the study of his writings absorbing. The casual reader will see little of these charms, for the reading of Browning is an art. He is so peculiar and in many respects so entirely a law unto himself that one must learn a new method of expression before he can fully appreciate his many beauties. To understand his mannerisms is not a difficult matter but as soon as it is accomplished the reader is confronted with a scholarly intellect whose thought cannot be easily mastered. Browning's methods are psychological and his analysis of character always deep and penetrating. He looks for the causes of things and traces them to their inevitable consequences. He writes for thinkers, and thinkers read and enjoy him. His really obscure passages come probably from his

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haste in composition, which, however, is not fast enough to keep pace with the rapidity of his thoughts. He leaps from one idea to another and sometimes arrives at conclusions without allowing for the slow steps of his reader's reasoning. These may be grave faults but they are the faults of a genius it is not for us to criticize. What we must do is to try to rise to the clear heights upon which he stands and then we shall be able to receive his inspiring message.

What this message is let us now take a moment to explain, although in that time one can tell little of it. He would teach us that every single life, no matter how humble, is important in itself; that life means much and that existence here is but a preparation for a fuller, broader life hereafter; that this broader life can be attained only from growth that must proceed from individual effort. In this effort joys and pains must come. In the former we should delight and see in the latter nothing but aids to a nobler existence by conquest. Such is the significance of the battle of joy with sorrow, of good with evil.

Pippa Passes The human soul is the object of Browning's study. Incident and description are valuable only as they aid in delineating the struggles, the failures, the glorified achievements of the soul. *Pippa Passes* is his most artistic little drama, and in a fascinating way it shows Browning and his philosophy as well as any one poem. At the same time it is not difficult to read. Pippa,

Pippa Passes

a little sick weaver, rises on New Year's Day, her one holiday in all the year, and thinks of the happiest four persons in all her little world. Though she would like to be in turn each one of these, she will not waste her day in sorrowful regret but will be gay and happy. So she goes forth, singing as she goes. Ottima, whose wealthy husband owns the silk mills, has a handsome lover, Sebald. Pippa would be loved like Ottima and have riches at her command. She does not know that the false Ottima, helped by her base lover, has just slain the old man, her husband, and at this very moment they are talking of the crime. Ottima is trying to revive the love of Sebald, whom the murder has frightened and made remorseful. She is succeeding when Pippa passes by, plucking the flowers, and sends her cheery little song,

“ The year's at the spring,
And day's at the morn ;”

to the ears of the guilty pair. As she goes on and reaches the words

“ God's in his heaven —
All's right with the world,”

Sebald sees as by a flash of heaven's own light the sinfulness of his deed. It is the beginning of a saving repentance for both.

Jules, the young sculptor, is also a subject of Pippa's innocent envy. He has just been tricked into marrying a girl below him and is about to

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cast her aside when Pippa, passing, carols a little love song. The better nature of Jules is aroused and he goes with his bride to begin again among strangers a life of art.

Luigi, the young patriot, is, to Pippa, happy in the care of his doting mother. If she could have the love of such a mother,—but she sings a song of wisdom, of justice and of peace, as she passes the house, and the words confirm Luigi in a patriotic resolve from which his mother had almost persuaded him.

It is night now and Pippa thinks of the Bishop, holiest of all she knows. But this hollow-hearted, scheming Bishop grasps at more riches and is threatening a villain who was instrumental in amassing the wealth the Bishop now enjoys. In defense the wretched Intendent says that the real heiress of the Bishop's wealth was not killed but is now living, the blackeyed Pippa, herself. Together they form a dastardly plot to remove her, but Pippa passes, singing in her innocent loveliness, of the white changing moon, the grass, the trees, and other simple things, and the Bishop's purpose is turned to one of peace.

Pippa, ignorant of the changes she has made in the lives of these four groups of persons, a little tired from her days pleasuring, unsuspecting of the great things in store for her, goes to her pallet in the attic and innocently wonders how she can ever approach them so as to touch and move them, "do

The Ring and the Book

some good or evil to them in some slight way." Finally she drops asleep with the words of the hymn upon her lips,

"All service ranks the same with God —
With God, whose puppets, best and worst,
Are we : there is no last nor first."

The Ring and the Book is Browning's longest and most ambitious poem. He tells the whole story briefly and quickly at the very beginning, a story of base intrigue, of murder, of punishment. Then the same story is told again at great length from ten different points of view. The half of Rome who sided with the murderer; the other half who favored his murdered wife; the neutral persons who have no sympathy with either; Pompilia on her death bed; the defending counsel; the public prosecutor; the Pope reviewing the case; and Guido in his final confession all go over the story from beginning to end. The new incidents brought in, the new turn given to the incidents already known, the wonderful range and depth of psychological insight shown in keeping these views consistent, the discriminating knowledge of character, the wealth of illustration and the strength and beauty of many passages make the poem of wonderful value to a real student. Of the number of persons met in the complex narrative, four are drawn in a masterful manner, four are vital creations. Count Guido, the most cold-blooded, greedy, scheming

English Literature

villain ever portrayed, shows not a redeeming trait. It is only his tortured and murdered wife who reveals a touch of human sympathy for him :

“So he was made ; he nowise made himself :
I could not love him, but his mother did.”

The frivolous priest, the Canon Caponsacchi, who is roused to manliness by one despairing appeal from the terror-stricken wife, curbs his love, sacrifices his position in the eyes of many but wins our unstinted admiration. With what nobility he flings himself into the championship of Pompilia and bares his soul to the coarse judges :

“ I have done with being judged.
I stand guiltless in thought, word and deed,
To the point that I apprise you—in contempt
For all misapprehending ignorance
O’ the human heart, much more the mind of
Christ,—

That I assuredly did bow, was blessed
By the revelation of Pompilia. There !
Such is the final fact I fling you, Sirs.”

But in contemplation of his lonely destiny he can but see what might have been :

“ To have to do with nothing but the true,
The good, the eternal —and these, not alone
In the main current of the general life,
But small experiences of every day,

The Ring and the Book

Concerns of the particular hearth and home :
To learn not only by a comet's rush,
But a rose's birth—not by the grandeur,
God,—
But the comfort, Christ."

"Little Pompilia with the patient brow" is the most impressive character Browning ever drew, the one noble being able to stand with Shakespeare's greatest women. She was but thirteen when called upon to pass through four years of most imminent peril to body and soul, to live in constant terror of her fiendish husband, while she knew and controlled her passionate love and admiration for the noble priest. Such purity, patience, faith and power of forgiveness, can be the result only of a saintly, spiritual insight. All this Browning brings out with a loving hand that never falters, even in the most delicate situation, when the least weakness in a phrase would destroy the exquisite beauty of his conception.

A few quotations may assist in creating an impression of her. She speaks of her priestly lover, her one friend, her only, all her own :

"O lover of my life, O soldier saint,
No work begun shall ever pause for death !
Love will be helpful to me more and more
I' the coming of the course, the new path I
must tread —

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My weak hand in thy strong hand, strong for
that !”

She sees and knows through this love the
unseen, after death :

“Through such souls alone
God stooping shows sufficient of his light
For us i' the dark to rise by. And I rise.”

Her love for her babe, in which for the first
time she realized God's birth and how He grew
likeliest God in being born, is like the love of Mary :

“We poor
Weak souls, how we endeavor to be strong !
I was already using up my life,—
This portion, now, should do him such a good,
This other go to keep off such an ill !
The great life ; see, a breath and it is gone !
So is detached, so left all by itself
The little life, the fact which means so much.
Shall not God stoop the kindlier to His work,
His marvel of creation, foot would crush,
Now that the hand He trusteth to receive
And hold it, lets the treasure fall perforce ?
The better ; He shall have in an orphanage
His own way clearer ; if my babe
Outlived the hour—and he has lived two
weeks—
It is through God who knows I am not by.

The Ring and the Book

Who is it makes the soft gold hair turn black,
And sets the tongue, might lie so long at rest,
Trying to talk? Let us leave God alone!
Why should I doubt He will explain in time
What I feel now, but fail to find the words?
My babe nor was, nor is, nor yet shall be
Count Guido Franceschini's child at all —
Only his mother's, born of love not hate!
So shall I have my rights in after time.
It seems absurd, impossible to-day;
So seems so much else not explained but
known!"

Guido even in his last terrorized appeal before
his execution recognizes her true nature.

"Abate,— Cardinal,— Christ,— Maria,—
God, . . .

Pompilia will you let them murder me?"

and she forgives and pardons him in her farewell
thoughts:

"We shall not meet in this world nor the next,
But where will God be absent? In His face
Is light, but in His shadow healing too:
Let Guido touch the shadow and be healed!"

The fourth of the great characters is the old
Pope, reviewing the case alone. He reads the
matter rightly, decides justly, and, though griev-
ing that Guido must die, sends the man to execu-
tion in the hope that the suddenness of the blow

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may be the one means for the salvation of the criminal's soul. In one place he says :

“Life is probation and the earth no goal
But starting point of man : compel him strive,
Which means in man as good as reach the
goal.”

Of Browning's other dramas, his lyrics, and the dramatic monologues which he handles in so masterly a manner, we have not space to speak. We can but close with his own last lines, which justify the estimate made at the beginning of this brief and inadequate notice :

“One who never turned his back, but marched
breast forward,
Never doubted clouds would break,
Never dreamed, though right were worsted,
wrong would triumph,
Held we fall to rise, are baffled to fight better,
Sleep to awake.”

Closely associated with Robert Browning's fame is that of his wife, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, the greatest English poetess. Kate Field, in a letter from Florence written in 1865, says this of her personal appearance :

“To those who loved Mrs. Browning (and to know her was to love her) she was singularly attractive. Hers was not the beauty

Elizabeth Barrett Browning

of feature; it was the loftier beauty of expression. Her slight figure seemed hardly large enough to contain the great heart that beat so fervently within, and the soul that expanded more and more as one year gave place to another. It was difficult to believe that such a fairy hand could pen such thoughts of ponderous weight, or that such a 'still small voice' could utter them with equal force. But it was Mrs. Browning's face upon which one loved to gaze — that face and head which almost lost themselves in the thick curls of her dark brown hair. That jealous hair could not hide the broad, fair forehead, 'royal with the birth,' as smooth as any girl's and 'too large for wreath of modern wont.' Her large brown eyes were beautiful, and were, in truth, the windows of her soul. They combined the confidingness of a child with the poet-passion of the heart and intellect; and in gazing into them it was easy to read *why* Mrs. Browning wrote. God's inspiration was her motive power, and in her eyes was the reflection of this higher light."

George S. Hilliard says :

"I have never seen a human frame which seemed so nearly a transparent veil for a

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celestial and immortal spirit. She is a soul of fire enclosed in a shell of pearl."

E. C. Stedman writes :

"The Victorian era, with its wider range of opportunities for women, has been illumined by the career of the greatest female poet that England has produced — nor only England, but the whole territory of the English language ; more than this, the most inspired woman, so far as known, of all who have composed in ancient or modern tongues, or flourished in any land or time."

The Rev. Joseph Cooke pays her this compliment :

"Mrs. Browning — Shakespeare's daughter. I think of her as the best symbol of the choicest part of Britain : in her grand Christian connections, her mighty aspirations for progress, her love of the poor, her spiritual tenderness born of Christianity, her mental aggressiveness born of science, her womanliness — I had almost said her manliness — I will say her heroic readiness to follow God, whithersoever he may lead."

She was born in 1809 into a luxurious home where her father, a wealthy merchant, petted her and carefully assisted the development of her

Elizabeth Barrett Browning

growing genius. In *Aurora Leigh* she draws a picture of herself in childhood that shows how she educated herself and amassed in spite of her fragile health the learning for which she was famous. The quotation is as follows :

“Books, books, books !

I had found the secret of a garret-room
Piled high with cases in my father's name ;
Piled high, packed large — where, creeping in
and out

Among the giant fossils of my past,
Like some small, nimble mouse between the
ribs

Of a mastodon, I nibbled here and there
At this or that box, pulling through the gap,
In heats of terror, haste, victorious joy,
The first book first. And how I felt it beat
Under my pillow, in the morning's dark,
An hour before the sun would let me read !
My books !”

In spite of ill health she worked incessantly and arduously. Her accomplishments were many and various and the profundity of her learning something marvelous for so frail a being. In 1837 she suffered a rupture of a blood vessel in her lungs and was taken by her brother to Torquay, a sea-side resort where it was hoped the milder climate would restore her health. She calls this her “en-

English Literature

forced exile to Torquay, with prophecy in the fear and grief and reluctance of it — a dreadful dream of an exile, which gave a nightmare to my life forever, and robbed it of more than I can speak of here." She alludes to the accidental drowning of her brother, who went out to sail with two friends, no one of whom was seen again.

In *Lady Geraldine's Courtship*, her most popular poem, she made complimentary reference to Robert Browning, who called to express his satisfaction. By some error of the servant he was shown to her sick room. From this first visit grew the many which ripened their mutual admiration into a love that scorned the opposition of her parents and led to a marriage she never repented, though her father refused to be reconciled to it.

From her marriage her health improved, and till her death the poets made their home in Italy, spending their summers in the Casa Guidi, Florence, and their winters in Rome. There in Florence she died in 1861, as she had hoped she would, in her own Casa Guidi. "Rome holds fast to Shelley and Keats, to whose lowly graves there is many a pilgrimage; and now Florence, no less honored, has its shrine sacred to the memory of . . . Elizabeth Barrett Browning."

So great, so lovely, so lovable a character could not but inspire other pens. Let them continue this sketch for us:

"Those who have known Casa Guidi as it

Elizabeth Barrett Browning

was could hardly enter the loved rooms now and speak above a whisper. They who have been so favored can never forget the square anteroom, with its great picture and piano-forte at which the boy Browning passed many an hour ; the little dining-room covered with tapestry, and where hung medallions of Tennyson, Carlyle and Robert Browning ; the long study filled with plaster casts and studies, which was Mr. Browning's retreat ; and, dearest of all, the large drawing-room where *she* always sat. There was something about this room that seemed to make it a proper and especial haunt for poets. The dark shadows and subdued light gave it a dreamy look, which was enhanced by the tapestry-covered walls and the old pictures of saints that looked out sadly from their carved frames of black wood. Large bookcases constructed of pieces of Florentine carving selected by Mr. Browning were brimming over with wise-looking books ; tables were covered with more gayly-bound volumes, the gifts of brother authors. Dante's grave profile, a cast of Keats's face and brow taken after death, a pen-and-ink sketch of Tennyson, the genial face of John Kenyon, Mrs. Browning's good friend and relative, little paintings of the boy Browning, all attracted

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the eye in turn, and gave rise to a thousand musings. A quaint mirror, easy-chairs and sofas, and a hundred nothings that always add an indescribable charm, were all massed in this room. But the glory of all, and that which sanctified all, was seated in a low arm-chair near the door. A small table strewn with writing-materials, books, and newspapers was always by her side."—*Kate Field*.

"He came into the anteroom to greet us, as did his little boy, Robert, whom they all call Pennini for fondness. The latter cognomen is a diminutive of Apennino, which was bestowed upon him at his first advent into the world because he was so very small, there being a statue in Florence of colossal size called Apennino. I never saw such a boy as this before; so slender, fragile and spirit-like — not as if he were actually in ill-health, but as if he had little or nothing to do with human flesh and blood. . . . Mrs. Browning met us at the door of the drawing-room and greeted us most kindly—a pale, small person, scarcely embodied at all; at any rate only substantial enough to put forth her slender fingers to be grasped, and to speak with a shrill, yet sweet, tenuity of voice. Really I do not see how Mr. Browning can suppose that he has an earthly wife any more

Elizabeth Barrett Browning

than an earthly child ; both are of the elfin race, and will flit away from him some day when he least thinks of it."—*Nathaniel Hawthorne*.

“Mrs. Browning’s character was well nigh perfect. Patient in long suffering, she never spoke of herself except when the subject was forced upon her by others, and then with no complaint. She *judged* not, saving when great principles were imperilled, and then was ready to sacrifice herself upon the altar of Right. Forgiving as she wished to be forgiven, none approached her with misgivings knowing her magnanimity. She was ever ready to accord sympathy to all, taking an earnest interest in the most insignificant, and so humble in her greatness that her friends looked upon her as a divinity among women. Thoughtful in the smallest of things for others, she seemed to give little thought to herself ; and believing in universal goodness, her nature was free from worldly suspicions. The first to see merit, she was the last to censure faults, and gave the praise that she felt with a generous hand. No one so heartily rejoiced at the success of others, no one was so modest in her own triumphs, which she looked upon more as a favor of which she was unworthy than as a

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right due to her. She loved all who offered her affection, and would solace and advise with any."—*Kate Field*.

The following critical comments on her most popular work will best introduce the subject:

"‘Cursed,’ says Tennyson in *Locksley Hall*, ‘be the social lies that warp us from the living truth;’ ‘cursed be the gold that gilds the straitened forehead of the fool.’ Love, asserting its God-given power and right to make two hearts happy, and to make their love, united in marriage, a fountain of home happiness for many, is in that poem baffled by worldly pride. In *Lady Geraldine’s Courtship* the same doctrine of the divine right of love to set its foot on the neck of pride is poetically preached in Mrs. Browning’s manner. . . . *Lady Geraldine’s Courtship* is steeped in melody—the language, the imagery, the sentiment, the thought all instinct with music, floating and flowing and rippling along in an element of liquid harmony and modulated brilliance." — *Peter Bayne*.

"*The Cry of the Factory Children* [printed in Part Eight, page 233] moves you, because it is no poem at all—it is just a long sob, veiled and stifled as it ascends through the hoarse voices of the poor beings themselves. Since

Elizabeth Barrett Browning

we read it we can scarcely pass a factory without seeming to hear this psalm issuing from the machinery, as if it were protesting against its own abused powers."—*Gilfillan*.

The *Sonnets from the Portuguese* from which we quote in Part Ten, pages 201 and 202, are thus characterized by E. C. Stedman :

“Here, indeed, the singer rose to her height. Here she is absorbed in rapturous utterance, radiant and triumphant with her own joy. The mists have risen and her sight is clear. Her mouthing and affectation are forgotten, her lips cease to stammer, the lyrical spirit has full control. The sonnet, artificial in weaker hands, becomes swift with feeling, red with a ‘veined humanity,’ the chosen vehicle of a royal woman’s vows. Graces, felicities, vigor, glory of speech, here are so crowded as to tread each upon the other’s sceptred pall. The first sonnet, equal to any in our tongue, is an overture containing the motive of the canticle — ‘not Death, but Love’ had seized her unaware. The growth of this happiness, her worship of its bringer, her doubts of her own worthiness, are the theme of these poems. She is in a sweet and, to us, pathetic surprise at the

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delight which at last has fallen to her. Never was man or minstrel so honored as her 'most gracious singer of high poems.' In the tremor of her love she undervalued herself — with all the feebleness of body, it was enough for any man to live within the atmosphere of such a soul! In fine, the *Portugese Sonnets* whose title was a screen behind which the singer poured out her full heart, are the most exquisite poetry hitherto written by a woman, and of themselves justify us in pronouncing their author the greatest of her sex — on the ground that the highest mission of a female poet is the expression of love, and that no other woman approaching her in genius has essayed the ultimate form of that expression."

Aurora Leigh is a long poetical novel which she calls "the most mature of my works, and the one in which my highest convictions upon Life and Art have entered."

"Upon the whole, I think that the chief value and interest of *Aurora Leigh* appertain to its marvelous illustrations of the development, from childhood on, of an aesthetical, imaginative nature. Nowhere in literature is the process of culture, by means of study and passionate experience, so graphically depicted.

Lesser Poets

It is the metrical and feminine complement to Thackeray's *Pendennis* — a poem that will be rightly appreciated by artists, thinkers, poets, and by them alone."—*E. C. Stedman*.

Lesser Poets There are several among the lesser poets who have written felicitous verse and expressed noble sentiments. Algernon Charles Swinburne, poet and critic, and Dante Gabriel Rossetti represent the romantic spirit; Edwin Arnold is a student of eastern religious lore, Arthur Hugh Clough a scholarly and classic poet of the skeptical school.

However, the work of these and other versifiers cannot be considered here. Our brief history of the Victorian Age and of English literature must close for we have reached the limits of this division of our course.

Studies

1. Can you find any selections from Ruskin which show that although he wrote prose he possessed the poetic spirit?

2. Do the selections from Matthew Arnold given in Part Eight bear out the statement that "if he offers a creed at all it is one of duty and endurance with little faith in ultimate rejoicings"?

3. Compare the writings of Dickens and Thackeray in respect to the class of society with which the authors dealt, and the method of their treatment.

4. In what peculiar ability is George Eliot unexcelled as a novelist?

5. Reread carefully the quotation from Frederick Meyers: "Duty, peremptory and absolute" was evidently the basis of George Eliot's religion and philosophy. Compare her conception of the nature and value of duty with that of Wordsworth in the *Ode to Duty*; with that of Carlyle in his "gospel of work;" and, if you are familiar with it, with Lowell's expression of his feeling for

"the high, stern-featured beauty

Of plain devotedness to duty."

What other writers can you name who have celebrated *duty* with like appreciation?

Studies

6. Characterize the work of any of the minor writers of the period with whom you are familiar.

7. The form of Tennyson's verse has been described as the most nearly perfect in the language. Can you justify this assertion?

8. Tell in your own words (1) upon what Browning directed his keen analysis and study; (2) the nature of his inspiring message as a poet; (3) why this message is sometimes obscure.

9. Does the character of Pippa, as it is meagerly developed in the text, interest you?

Do you care for further study of the poem in which she lives?

10. Upon what characteristics of Mrs. Browning do all of the commentators agree?

11. What breadth of perception and of sympathy would you expect to find reflected in the writings of a woman who "*judged* not, save when great principles were imperilled" and who believed in "universal goodness"?

12. Why should the spirit of unrest and unceasing analysis which has dominated the most recent English literature make impossible the creation of masterpieces?

Tabular Outline
and
Literary Map of England

Tabular Outline of English Literature

A. *Preparation.* From Cædmon's *Paraphrase* (670) to the death of Chaucer (1400).

I. Prior to Chaucer's birth (1340?).

Beowulf

Cædmon

-680.

Bede

673-735.

II. During Chaucer's life.

Sir John Mandeville

1300-1372.

John Wyclif

1324-1384.

William Langland *Piers Plowman*

1332-

CHAUCER

1340(?) - 1400.

B. *Accomplishment.* From the death of Chaucer to the present time.

I. The period of Italian Influence from the death of Chaucer to the Restoration of Charles II (1660).

1. The Age of Reaction. From the death of Chaucer to the accession of Queen Elizabeth (1558).
Malory. *Morte d' Arthur*.

William Tyndale 1490(?) - 1536.

2. The Age of Elizabeth. From 1558 to 1603, the Accession of James I.

John Lyly 1554(?) - 1606.

FRANCIS BACON 1561 - 1626.

Sir Philip Sidney 1554 - 1586.

Sir Walter Raleigh 1552 - 1618.

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EDMUND SPENSER

1552-1599.

Christopher Marlowe 1564-1593.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

1564-1616.

Ben Jonson 1573-1637.

Francis Beaumont 1584-1616.

John Fletcher 1579-1625.

3. The Puritan Age. From the Accession of James I to the Restoration of Charles II (1660).

Izaak Walton 1593-1683.

Jeremy Taylor 1613-1667.

Sir Thomas Browne 1605-1682.

John Bunyan 1628-1688.

JOHN MILTON 1608-1674.

Robert Herrick 1591-1674.

II. The period of French Influence. From the Restoration of Charles II to the death of Pope (1744).

1. Age of the Restoration. From the Restoration of Charles II to the Accession of Queen Anne (1702).

Samuel Butler 1612-1680.

JOHN DRYDEN 1631-1700.

John Locke 1632-1704.

Samuel Pepys 1633-1703.

Sir Isaac Newton 1642-1727.

2. The Age of Queen Anne. From the Accession of Queen Anne to the death of Pope.

Tabular Outline of English Literature

Johnathan Swift 1667-1745.

Daniel De Foe 1661(?) - 1731.

Richard Steele 1672-1729.

JOSEPH ADDISON 1672-1745.

ALEXANDER POPE

1688-1744.

III. The Modern English Period. From the death of Pope to the present time.

1. The Beginnings. From the death of Pope to 1780.

Samuel Richardson 1689-1761.

Henry Fielding 1707-1754.

Dr. Samuel Johnson 1709-1784.

David Hume 1711-1776.

Laurence Sterne 1713-1768.

Thomas Gray 1716-1771.

Tobias George Smollett

1721-1771.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH

1728-1774.

Edmund Burke 1729-1797.

Edward Gibbon 1737-1794.

2. The Romantic School. From 1780 to 1837, the Accession of Queen Victoria.

William Cowper 1731-1800.

Robert Burns 1759-1796.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

1770-1850.

SIR WALTER SCOTT

1771-1832.

English Literature

Samuel Taylor Coleridge

1772-1834.

Robert Southey

1774-1843.

Charles Lamb

1775-1834.

Lord Byron

1788-1824.

Percy Bysshe Shelley

1792-1822.

John Keats

1795-1821.

3. **The Victorian Age. From the Accession of Victoria to the present time.**

Thomas Carlyle

1795-1881.

Thomas Macaulay

1800-1859.

Elizabeth Barrett Browning

1806-1861.

ALFRED TENNYSON

1809-1892.

William Makepeace Thackeray

1811-1863.

Charles Dickens

1812-1870.

ROBERT BROWNING

1812-1889.

John Ruskin

1819-1900.

GEORGE ELIOT

1819-1880.

Matthew Arnold

1822-1888.

Robert Louis Stevenson

1850-1894.

Rudyard Kipling

1865-

Literary Map of England

Upon the accompanying map are indicated some of the places where the greatest of British writers have lived and worked and died. The system of reference is simple: For example, the number 33 appears on the map under Keswick; the student turns to *Keswick* (33 ; 5 — D) in the alphabetical list which supplements the map and finds that it is a village where Coleridge lived and where Southey is buried. Again, selecting number 2 under *Farringford* in the Isle of Wight, and consulting the list of places, he finds the name to be that of a country home of Tennyson. If the name is known, a place may readily be found on the map from its number and approximate position, indicated in parenthesis in the list. Thus, after Milston, the birthplace of Addison, appears in the list (4 ; 7 — L): by tracing on the map an imaginary line to the right from *L* in the left-hand margin, and another line upward from 7 in the lower margin until it intersects the first, Milston with its number 4 is easily found. In order to save space in the list the words *born*, *lived* and *died* are abbreviated to *b. l. d.*

Study of the map and references to it have value not merely as lessons in geography but because of their assistance in fixing the student's impressions of the various writers studied. Just

English Literature

as one likes to think of an absent friend as living and moving about in familiar scenes, so it may be pleasant to center the facts and associations of each author's life about definite localities, around actually existing places. To know that George Eliot when a young woman met the philosopher Emerson, and that each writer was much impressed with the marked individuality of the other, is interesting; but to picture this meeting at Coventry, to place it among some of the most loved and memorable scenes of George Eliot's life, gives the fact an added value. It is well to know, too, the relative position of the homes of contemporary writers, since this must necessarily have a direct connection with the intermingling of their lives and their influence. A glance at the Lake Region with its cluster of little towns and villages will at once reveal the possibility of intimate association among the Lake Poets. The island is so filled with literary shrines that a grouping of them should not be very difficult. Weave as many threads of association about each locality as possible. The information given in the list of places is necessarily meager. Add to it facts that you gather from your reading. Picture as definitely as you can the appearance of the homes and surroundings of writers who have appealed to you most. In some cases this effort will be materially aided by the illustrations in the text. Rydal Mount, Rydal Water, Grasmere

Literary Map of England

Church and the old Ambleside Mill should give you a vivid impression of the character of the beautiful lake district. Abbotsford becomes a reality; Ayr, though you never have seen "the thick'ning green" of its "wild woods" nor ever have heard the river "gurgling, kiss its pebbled shore," becomes something far more than a name in a guide-book or a number on a map. How many other pictures of places in the British Isles appear in these volumes? There are, too, word-pictures — the descriptions more or less definite of his surroundings given by poet or artistic prose writer. The calm beauty of Stoke Pogis, the thatched cottage in which Burns was born, the "landskip" about Milton's Horton, are definitely suggested in the poems we have read. Our pleasure in these scenes is something quite independent of their actual existence, yet they serve greatly in bringing nearer to us those who have recreated and idealized them.

REFERENCE LIST

Abbotsford : (39 ; 5 — B) Scott l. d. 1832 ; an imposing castle and mansion on the banks of the Tweed.

Addison : See Milston.

Aldwinkle : (19 ; 9 — I) Dryden b. 1631.

Aldworth : (5 ; 8 — L) Tennyson l. d. 1892 ; the poet's summer home after 1868.

Arnold : see Laleham, Liverpool.

Ayr : (36 ; 3 — B) Burns b. 1759. Here are still standing the haunted kirk of *Tam O'Shanter* and the poet's birthplace, the thatched cottage, described in *The Cotter's Saturday Night*.

Bacon : see St. Albans.

Bishopsgate : (7 ; 8 — K) Shelley l.

Brantwood : (30 ; 5 — E) Ruskin d. 1900 ; a vine-covered mansion, formerly inhabited by the poet Massey, where Ruskin spent his later years.

Brontë : see Haworth, Thornton.

Browning, E. B. : see Durham.

Bunyan : see Elstow.

Burns : see Ayr, Dumfries.

Byron : see Harrow, Newstead Abbey.

Carlyle : see Ecclefechan.

Cockermouth : (34 ; 5 — D) Wordsworth b. 1770. The factory-shaped "old House" of the poet's father is still standing.

Coleridge : see Keswick, Ottery St. Mary.

Coventry : (20 ; 7 — I) Eliot l. Birds Grove, the home in which she passed some of her most memorable years, yet remains, somewhat altered.

Cowper : see East Dereham, Olney.

De Quincey : see Edinburgh, Grasmere, Manchester.

Dickens : see Landport, Rochester.

Dryden : see Aldwinkle.

Reference List

Dumfries : (35; 4—C) Burns l. d. 1796. In the churchyard, where an imposing mausoleum is erected to his memory, he and his "bonnie Jean" lie.

Durham : (32; 7—D) Browning, E. B., b. 1806.

East Dereham : (18; 10—H) Cowper d. 1800. In the chapel of St. Edmund are the poet's grave and monument.

Ecclefechan : (38; 5—C) Carlyle b. 1795. The monument which marks his grave stands within a few rods of the place where he was born.

Edinburgh : (37; 5—A) Scott b. 1771; De Quincey l. d. 1859. On Princess Street is the celebrated monument, over 200 feet high, erected to the memory of Scott.

Eliot : see Coventry.

Elstow : (17; 9—J) Bunyan b. 1628; l. In the village church are the bell which it was once Bunyan's duty to ring, and two windows depicting scenes from the *Pilgrim's Progress* and the *Holy War*.

Farringford : (2; 7—M) Tennyson l.; a "cheerful gray country mansion" described in his later poems.

Field Place : (6; 9—L) Shelley b. 1792.

Gibbon : see Putney.

Grasmere : (31; 5—D) Wordsworth l. De Quincey l. In Dove Cottage Wordsworth passed his "poetic prime." Here, too, De Quincey lived in later years. In the Grasmere churchyard is the poet's tomb.

Harrow : (10; 9—K) The town is known for a celebrated grammar school founded in 1571 and attended by such men as Sheridan, Peel, Trollope and Byron. Here were passed Byron's happiest years.

Haworth : (28; 7—F) Brontë l. d. 1855. In the ancient church is pointed out the place where she was accustomed to sit—within a foot of where she is now buried. In this church she was married and here is a window dedicated to her by an American.

Horton : (9; 8—K) Milton l.; where *Comus*, *Lycidas*, *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso* were written.

Johnson : see Lichfield.

English Literature

Keswick : (33 ; 5 — D) Coleridge l. in Greta Hall. In Crosthwaite Churchyard Southey is buried, on his monument the inscription by Wordsworth. Near by is the Fall of Ladore celebrated by him.

Laleham : (8 ; 8 — K) Arnold b. 1822. He is buried here in the churchyard of the village.

Landport : (3 ; 8 — M) Dickens b. 1812.

Lichfield : (22 ; 7 — I) Johnson b. 1709 ; a cathedral town ; here stands in the Public Square a large statue of Johnson.

Liverpool : (25 ; 5 — G) Arnold d. 1888.

London : No attempt is made to name the numerous literary people who lived in this great city.

Macaulay : see Rothley Temple.

Manchester : (26 ; 6 — G) De Quincey b. 1735.

Milston : (4 ; 7 — L) Addison b. 1672.

Milton : see Horton.

Newstead Abbey : (23 ; 8 — H) Byron l. at intervals for 20 years ; a mediæval fortress containing numerous priceless relics of the poet.

Olney : (16 ; 8 — J) Cowper l. Here is yet standing the poet's house, in the market place.

Ottery St. Mary : (1 ; 4 — M) Coleridge b. 1772.

Pope : see Twickenham.

Putney : (11 ; 9 — L) Gibbon b. 1737.

Rochester : (13 ; 10 — L) Dickens d. 1870 ; a very ancient city, some of the localities of which, as *Eastgate House*, *Watts' Charity House* and the *Victoria and Bull Inn* Dickens has described in his works under different names.

Rothley Temple : (21 ; 9 — H) Macaulay b. 1800.

Ruskin : see Brantwood.

Rydal Mount : (29 ; 5 — D) Wordsworth l. d. 1850 ; his vine-covered home in one of the most beautiful spots in the lake region.

St. Albans : (14 ; 9 — J) Bacon l. ; a very ancient town noted for its abbey church.

Scott : see Abbotsford, Edinburgh.

Shakespeare : see Stratford-on-Avon.

Reference List

Shelley : see Bishopsgate, Field Place.

Somersby: (24 ; 9 — G) Tennyson b. 1809. The Rectory where he was born, and its surroundings are described in the *Ode to Memory*.

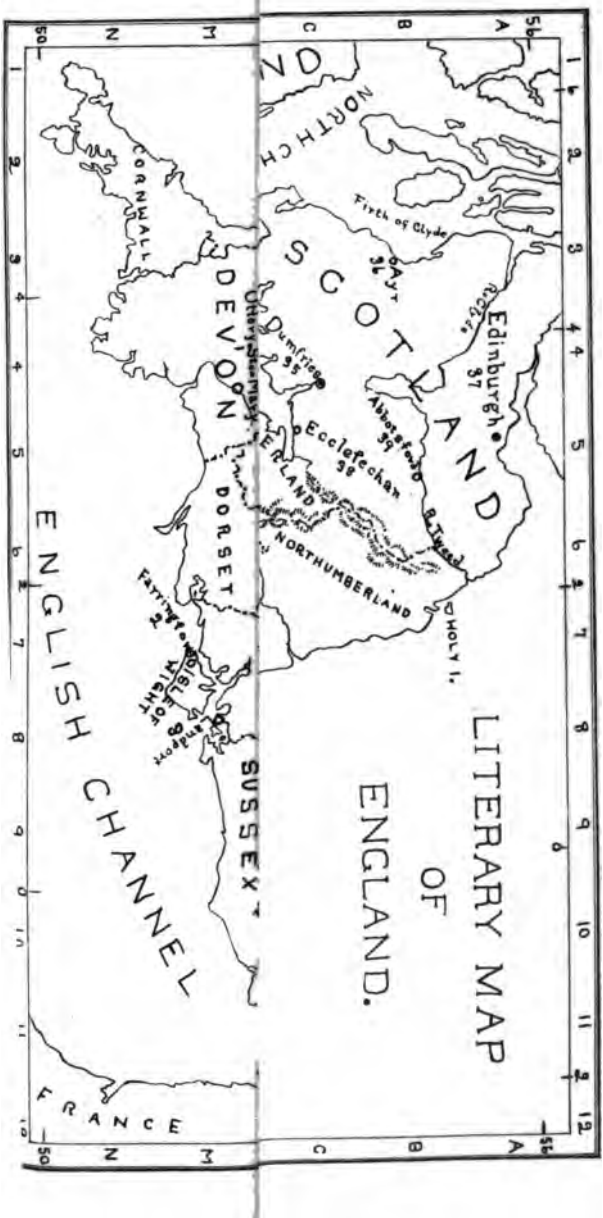
Stratford-on-Avon : (15 ; 7 — J) Shakespeare b. 1564, d. 1616. Here the great bard's birthplace and tomb, the Guild Chapel and Hall, the Grammar School and the Hathaway Cottage have become shrines.

Tennyson : see Aldworth, Farringford, Somersby.

Thornton : (27 ; 7 — F) Brontë b. 1816.

Twickenham : (12 ; 9 — K) Pope l. d. 1744 ; his home was a beautiful villa on the Thames about 12 miles from London.

Wordsworth : see Cockermouth, Grasmere, Rydal Mount.



The Revolutionary Period

wards, a theologian who more than any other has exerted an influence on American thought. For about a hundred years his great work, an argument against the freedom of the will, was accepted as unanswerable by the theologians of his school and day, and even now if his premises are allowed his conclusions seem to follow inevitably. He upheld strenuously the doctrines of original sin, total depravity, election and eternal punishment. He represented merely the moral life of the New England colonists.

Benjamin
Franklin

Benjamin Franklin who stood in political and social life as Jonathan Edwards did in the moral and religious life, is the one other great name that figures conspicuously before the Revolution. There is in his writings besides practical, homely, common sense a certain literary quality that puts them above anything written at that time. His importance has been duly recognized, and a biographical sketch and suitable extracts will be found in Part Fifteen, page 125, and page 27.

Revolutionary
Period

The era of the Revolution gave the public a great quantity of patriotic and political matter in the shape of argumentative essays and addresses. Freedom and the rights of man were ably championed and sometimes the heights of impassioned eloquence were reached. Thomas Paine's *Crisis* and *Common Sense*, with the essays of Hamilton, Madison, and Jay which appeared in the newspapers and were afterwards

American Literature

collected as *The Federalist*, are the most noted writings of the time. *The Federalist* papers were written to explain and make popular the new Constitution of the United States, and they fulfilled their purpose admirably.

One novelist, our first, Charles Brockden Browne, belongs to this period, but the elaborate horrors and revolting details of his stories, combined with his stilted language and lack of humor and pathos, have long since relegated him to obscurity.

And so we pass the end of the eighteenth century before we find here in America any writer comparable to those who made England's literature famous long before the Victorian Era. This is not so much to be wondered at when we think of those two centuries of struggle and conflict, during which the new civilization was being established on this continent. Privation and want, labor and warfare, are not conducive to a life of quiet and meditation such as the poet loves, and though the exciting events, the strenuous endeavors, the stern self-repression and the fiery passions of the age were all making material for the literature of the future, yet they were not incentives to its production.

National Period—The Earlier Writers

If we except the work of Franklin, the literature of America, then, is a nineteenth century product. The first half of the century brought out a group of famous men who wrote for the sake of writing, and who succeeded in leaving behind them much genuine literature that will always be read for its beauty and for the inspiring nature of its thought.

But before taking up this group we should look for a moment at the great leader of the Unitarian movement. William Ellery Channing was born in 1780, but the revival of Unitarianism, of which he was the most conspicuous advocate, had its beginning in 1812 at the same time as the second war with Great Britain. We cannot go into the theological controversies of the time and it is not often that such discussions produce anything of much interest to the student of literature, but Channing's writings have merit in themselves and he was so immediately the forerunner of Emerson and the Transcendentalists that his career is of decided importance. He was the son of a Boston lawyer and was educated at Harvard, from which he graduated in 1798, five years after the death of his father. He was a healthy child and is remembered in Harvard as strong and muscular, though of small stature.

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He was fluent in his composition and won some distinction in college by his essays and orations.

After graduation he went to Virginia as a tutor in a private family. Here he learned his first lessons in the evils of slavery and ever afterward was a bitter opponent of that institution. While in Virginia his ambition to become a great scholar led him into a life of privation and self-denial, in order to procure the means for study. He worked early and late, lived in accordance with his ascetic ideas of renunciation and purity and so completely undermined his health that for the rest of his life he was more than half an invalid. This ill-health he had always to fight but he fought it alone and disturbed no one by the conflict. He spent his salary as he earned it, but not in extravagance for himself. To do good to others was his motto and he lived up to its spirit. He was always an ardent champion of freedom, always an active participant in the reforms of the day, and though his views suffered some change as the years passed on, the changes were all those of advancement and improvement.

His was a voice of encouragement, of love, of inspiration. Fearless himself, he drove fear from the minds of the timid and hesitating. "Wait not to be backed by numbers," he said at the ordination of a young minister. "Wait not till you are sure of an echo from the crowd. The fewer the voices on the side of truth, the more distinct and strong must be your own."

Washington Irving

That the works of this theologian are read so long after his death is good evidence that Channing possessed a style and manner that might have made him a power in the world of letters, had he chosen literature as his profession.

Until after the close of the second war with Great Britain, the English had showed little interest in the writings of Americans. The religious struggles of the colonists may have been noted by a few active sympathizers, and of course the political upheaval which resulted in the independence of this country had thrown its pamphlets and essays into the hands of many Englishmen. Franklin was known and honored among them as an intellectual equal, but none of those Americans who had enjoyed local popularity were recognized abroad as authors of merit. In this judgment we now concur.

Washington
Irving With Washington Irving a new era opens. He was recognized as a man of letters, competent to carry on the traditions of style and manner that had descended through the long line of great English authors. He brought to the notice of the English the legends of his native land and clothed some of them in classic prose, but he did not confine his attention to American subjects. He found in the Moorish occupancy of Spain material for many charming stories, and no less than three histories. He was a prolific writer and succeeded as historian, essayist, and novelist. The histories he wrote are of the romantic type,

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entertaining as narratives but attempting no philosophy, for of that he knew little. His stories are capital, mingling pathos with bright humor in a most delightful manner, as *Rip Van Winkle* and the *Legend of Sleepy Hollow* testify. His style, smooth and flowing, simple and elegant, bears a charm for all who read him.

The *Knickerbocker History of New York* is a strange compound of sense and nonsense, of fact and fiction, the fun of which often lies in the insensible gradation by which he passes from truth to the broadest caricature. It is doubtful whether the book will long retain its great popularity, but while the memory of the old Dutch burgher is in the minds of the people, its good-natured raillery will be enjoyed.

His lack of deep scholarship and of critical spirit allow him to give rein to an imagination that sometimes colors facts. The lengthy biographies produced during his later life are vivid, and introduce us to people who live with us as we read their lives, though we cannot feel that he is describing the real men.

We do not look to him for a serious message; he has no lesson to teach. But he is a refined and delightful entertainer to whom we can be grateful for much pleasure and no pain. Such glimpses as he gives us into the splendid and romantic past, such touching instances of human strength and weakness as he finds among his con-

James Fenimore Cooper

temporaries, such eloquent pathos and delicate humor as that with which he fills his pages can but compel our respect and personal regard.

For a biographical sketch, further comments and specimens of his work see Part Fifteen, page 146, and page 47, and Part Fourteen, page 239.

The next American to attain Euro-
James Fenimore Cooperpean recognition was James Fenimore Cooper, and though not comparable to Irving in excellence of style, he was accorded a wider popularity than his more refined predecessor. The reasons for this are not far to seek. Contemporary with Scott, his stories were of the same vivid, exciting type, but dealt with a new civilization in a new way. Such stories would naturally find a greater number of readers than the more technically perfect writings of Irving. Cooper has often been called the American Scott. This statement may be true so far as both are great story-tellers but when their works are compared the result is not favorable to the American. Scott created real men and women, while Cooper's best characters are improbable creatures and his others are mere puppets talking in strained and artificial style; in this lies the chief difference between the two great writers. Cooper's novels, however, are interesting; the plots are skillful and though sometimes long drawn out they are sufficiently attractive to keep a person reading and wondering what will be the next thing to happen. Then

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the stories are American in spirit and that means they are manly and pure. They have a clear setting and an atmosphere of verity that make some amends for the artificiality of the beings in whose fortunes we are interested.

The successful novels may be classified in three groups: stories of the sea, land stories of the Revolution, and stories of Indian and backwoods life. *The Pilot* best represents the first class, *The Spy* the second class, and *The Last of the Mohicans* the third class. *The Last of the Mohicans*, probably the greatest of his novels, is one of a series of five called the *Leatherstocking Tales*, the hero of all of which is the backwoodsman hunter, trapper, guide and pioneer, Natty Bumpo, Leatherstocking, Hawkeye, or Deerslayer, as he is variously known. Natty Bumpo is Cooper's best drawn character and to a certain type of mind he is a very real and inspiring hero. It is to the youthful and adventurous in spirit that Cooper appeals and boys will always love the stirring qualities of his picturesque hero. The *Leatherstocking Tales* in order of events, though not in order of composition, are *The Deerslayer*, *The Last of the Mohicans*, *The Pathfinder*, *The Pioneers* and *The Prairie*. We have mentioned the best of Cooper's stories, but there are many others that will prove interesting, especially if the reader has mastered the art of skipping. His first story,

James Fenimore Cooper

Precaution, was published in 1820. As it was a novel of English society with which he was entirely unfamiliar, it was a failure. *The Spy* was published the next year and by 1832, the year of Scott's death, Cooper had written nearly all of his best known novels. Though he lived until 1851 he did little after 1832 to increase his reputation. Few American writers have had a wider Continental reputation and the translations of his stories, sometimes better even than the originals, have been highly popular in France, Germany and other European countries.

The man himself was an interesting character. He was very tall, heavy set, of impressive appearance and dignified bearing. He was born in 1789, in Cooperstown, New York, a village which his father had founded and where he lived in a big mansion which he had named Otsego Hall, from the lake on which it was built. At school young Cooper, "Jim" as he was familiarly known, was more fond of fishing, hunting and roaming the wild forests than of books, and the fun-loving nature which he inherited from his father often led him into mischief and trouble. He was prepared for Yale, entered at thirteen and after spending nearly three years at that institution was expelled for some boyish prank. His fondness for adventure led him to the sea and with his father's permission he made his first voyage to Europe. At

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nineteen he was made a midshipman in the United States navy and served for three years. Then he married and returned to New York to begin life on a farm. He was very fond of his occupation and took great pride in the products of his garden.

One day after he was thirty years of age and had as yet given no indication of his genius as a writer, he was reading a poor English novel and, disgusted at its weakness, exclaimed to his wife that he believed he could write a better novel himself. She urged him to try and he set about the task. If he did not succeed in his first attempt, his second, *The Spy*, certainly justified his confidence in himself.

Soon after, he moved to New York city and resided there till 1826, when he went abroad with his family and remained for seven years. When he sailed he was an ardent lover of his country and abroad was her enthusiastic defender. He published a book in which he endeavored to establish the superiority of the United States to every thing English, but only succeeded in alienating the generous feelings of respect and admiration with which he had been received abroad. His gruff manners, intolerance of opposition and rabid defense of every thing American aided to increase the unfavorable impression his book had created. Though he mingled with the best of England's people and doubtless absorbed some of their notions, he was never able to establish really friendly relations with any of them.

James Fenimore Cooper

So he returned to America and his home, filled with pleasant anticipations. But he found that in his long absence things had changed and that many of the traits he had most vehemently lauded were rapidly passing away. This irritated him intensely and he published scathing criticisms that rapidly brought him into disrepute among the public who had previously praised him. He was subjected to violent attacks by the critics of the day and aroused to speedy action by the sting of their epithets. Again and again he sued the publishers for libel and was usually successful, though he failed to win any approval by the results.

Added to these contentions were troubles with his neighbors and personal friends. Although he was highly democratic in his speech and ideas, his habits were characterized by an exclusiveness that gave offense and his manners to the inhabitants of his own town were rather those of a superior than of an equal. A beautiful point of land jutting out into the lake had long been considered public property by the people of his village and when he laid claim to this, forbade its use as a picnic ground and closed it up entirely, he earned their serious resentment, although it was established that the land really belonged to him.

In spite of the bitter opposition he created and the rude criticism he had to endure, he was a man of noble and generous heart. It was only on the surface that he was a boor and many of his harsh judgments came from a supersensitive nature and

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a suspicious disposition prone to find evidence of slight and injury when none were intended. But he lived to see most of the opposition subside and when he died the people sincerely mourned him.

Cooper and Irving, Franklin and Browne were the only Americans prior to the end of the first third of the nineteenth century who achieved anything like lasting fame as writers of prose, and only the first two mentioned can be regarded as really successful men of letters. They all belong to the middle states which center about New York. They succeeded best in prose fiction, the very form of literature then most popular in England. Previously all writings in America were devoted to religion or to politics. This might be called a literature of knowledge, but neither Irving nor Cooper wrote in that vein. Theirs was a literature of beauty, of pleasure, of entertainment; both were satisfied if they could give enjoyment to their readers. Neither one delved into the mysteries of life or probed the human mind. If the characters in their books suffered peril it was the good healthy peril of the human body; if they fell it was the tragedy of physical destruction, and not a tragedy of the soul.

But the young nation was not without
William
Cullen Bryant its poets. William Cullen Bryant, whose biography appears in Part Eight, page 257, and from whom we have quoted in Parts Seven

Bryant and Poe

and Eight, was born in 1794. He lived until 1878, so that his long life spanned almost the whole period of American literature, but his greatest poems date back to the years before the beginning of the Victorian era, with which we must ally American literature and ally it so closely that it becomes really one and the same thing. Moreover, Bryant's style is the style of the earlier age and his thought usually far removed from the depth and vigor of Victorian writers. Bryant was born in Massachusetts, but he lived and wrote in New York and with that city his name is most closely associated.

Though Edgar A. Poe was born in Boston and lived much of his life in Virginia he worked longer in New York than elsewhere, and it is of New York authors that most of his critiques were written. His life runs over into the Victorian era but he had become famous as early as 1837. He was such a wanderer in life and so erratic in literature that he may be classified as well in this group as elsewhere.

We have sketched his biography before and quoted from his work in Part Seven, page 141, and pages 61, 62 and 68.

Bryant's simple and clear style, his tenderness and sweetness have long been recognized and his place in the world of writers assured. Not so with Poe. His erratic and dissipated life, his

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melancholy end and the unkind stories that were circulated about him blinded people for a long time to his real merit as a writer. But of late a fairer spirit is prevailing and there is being accorded him the high position he undoubtedly deserves. As a master of rhythm and the nameless music of poetry he stands unrivaled, as he does in his power to create for his readers the peculiar atmosphere he desires. His stories are as vivid as they are weird and terrible; the gloom of his poetry is as dark and depressing as though one believed in the sincerity of the poet's utterance. We have had no other such genius as Poe, and among the English, only Burns and Marlowe come to us as types for comparison.

New York continued to be the center for the production of a certain type of literature that found currency through a few magazines which had their day of popularity in spite of what now seems their sentimental uselessness. Of the many writers who contributed to them up to the early sixties, the chief and at the same time the most characteristic was Nathaniel Parker Willis. He was born in Portland, Maine, in 1807, but his father moved to Boston very soon after, and founded *The Youth's Companion*, now so universally known in the United States. The family belonged to the one remaining Calvinistic church and the boy was brought up strictly in the tenets of that faith. Because Harvard was considered the hotbed of the liberal movement, the young

Ratbaniel Parker Willis

man was sent to Yale as a more suitable institution. When he returned to Boston he was the most orthodox fop the city had ever seen. He tried to do some editorial work but failed and moved to New York in disgust. Here he was more successful and finally was sent to England as a magazine correspondent. With no money and few friends he was still able to make his way into English society, to meet the titled and wealthy, and finally to marry a rich heiress in spite of her knowledge of his poverty. His dandified habits and wonderful assurance carried him through where many a better man would have failed. The death of his first wife was followed by a second marriage. He soon found himself embroiled in money troubles and finally settled down to unremitting toil to support himself and family honorably. He lived to be sixty-one years of age.

The popularity of both his prose and poetry was phenomenal and they must have had some merit. His *Absalom*, *Hagar in the Wilderness* and other metrical paraphrases of scriptural narrative are still enjoyed by the devout, particularly in the less cultured communities. His poems, sacred, passionate and humorous, his letters from abroad, his criticisms on current literature and the good-natured essays in which he attempted to help out some needy and deserving literary friend have all disappeared from public recollection.

Studies

1. Why was it to be expected that the general theme of the earliest colonial literature would be religious in character?

2. Compare the spirit that dominated the American literature of this age with the spirit of the age of Pope and Dryden.

3. Suppose that Shakespeare's writings had been known to the colonists. Do you think that they would have rivaled in popularity the works of Cotton Mather and Jonathan Edwards? Does it seem probable that they might even have been entirely neglected? Why?

4. What is there in the nature of Franklin's philosophy that makes its influence far more wide-reaching than that of Emerson and Carlyle?

5. Characterize the style of literature and name some of the writers of the Revolutionary period.

6. Why was it that an original literature, really American in tone, was not possible till after the Revolution?

7. Tell something of Channing's personality and of his influence.

8. Name the qualities that make Irving's style artistic.

9. Explain fully what is meant by this criticism of Irving as an author: "He saw life

Studies

through the literary atmosphere, and had no theories to ventilate, no reforms to advocate, no specific moral value to enforce."

10. What purpose in their writings did Irving and Cooper have in common? How did their works mark a departure from the "literature of knowledge"? Compare the personality of Cooper with that of Scott.

11. Which of the English poets does William Cullen Bryant seem to resemble most closely?

12. Describe the unusual power possessed by Poe that gives to his poems their originality and fascination.



National Period — The Civil War Group

Boston But we have dwelt long enough on the first school of American literature, if school it may be called, and must turn our attention from the New York center to Boston, where the greatest of American writers were coming into prominence. To understand their relationships and the significance of their work we glance again at the history of that intellectual city.

Boston has always occupied a somewhat isolated position. It is not on any of the great highways to other places. It is not the terminus of any great transatlantic steamship lines, and until the construction of its numerous railways, was not in ready communication with other American cities. When people go to Boston it is because they have business in Boston; while New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Chicago, St. Louis and other great cities are on lines of travel that naturally bring to them many people whose ultimate destination is elsewhere. Boston stands for the whole of eastern Massachusetts and what is true of her is true of the entire region.

Add to this fact of geographical isolation the further conditions that Boston and vicinity were settled by a people possessed of high moral sentiment, intense energy and the stern power of self-repression; that her settlers came to this country to be free to worship as they pleased and that

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they meant to preserve their integrity to the last, and it can be readily seen that conservatism and individuality were the natural result. Social distinctions arose, continued to be observed till far into the nineteenth century, and are not wholly extinguished even now. The clergy early assumed and long maintained a dictatorial power that was often unquestioned by the laity; the wealthy merchants constituted the aristocracy, while the farmers, the poorer class in the cities, and the servants generally were as decidedly inferior in social position as though the people did not pride themselves on their democracy.

But the Calvinistic creed had taught the people rectitude of conduct and perhaps unwittingly had given them the truth-searching spirit. The clergy watched and criticised their congregations both as to laxities in daily life and as to backsliding or wanderings from the true faith. Accordingly attention became centered on religion and the congregation in its turn became as watchful and as critical as the preacher himself. Then the keen intellects of those watching hundreds became restive under the restraints about them and both pew and pulpit began to think in new lines.

Unitarianism In some such way as this, it came about that Calvinism gave way to the new Unitarianism, so that when the nineteenth century opened there was in Boston but one Calvinistic church, the Old South, long known to the

Unitarianism and Transcendentalism

irreverent as "Brimstone Corner." But we cannot go into these controversies except so far as is necessary to make clear the greatest literature America has known. Unitarianism is no longer in the ascendent but, at the time of which we are writing, the men who led the movement were of such refined, cultivated and morally beautiful character that it is little wonder they revolutionized thought, even in orthodox old Boston.

The rapid spread of Unitarian ideas followed closely after the war of 1812 and the outburst of literary power was coincident with Boston's greatest commercial and business prosperity. The building of numerous railways had connected the various outlying villages; towns and factories had arisen and the fisheries and other commercial industries had made their influence felt far at sea. This epoch was a Renaissance for the Puritan colonies as much as was the Shakespearean period a new birth for England. It was, too, a time of intellectual unrest, of the abandonment of old ideas, of irreverence for the past and of a profound and unwarranted confidence in the future.

Transcendentalism An outgrowth of this spirit was the philosophical movement known as Transcendentalism. The exact doctrines of this school are hard to define, for there were really no fixed principles of faith. To some the word meant one thing, while to others its meaning was

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quite different, but perhaps all would admit at least the definition given in 1840 by George Ripley, who was for a time their leader:

“There is a class of persons who desire a reform in the prevailing philosophy of the day. These are called Transcendentalists because they believe in an order of truths which transcends the sphere of the external senses. Their leading idea is the supremacy of mind over matter. Hence they maintain that the truth of religion does not depend on tradition or historical facts, but has an unerring witness in the soul. There is a light, they believe, which enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world; there is a faculty in all — the most degraded, the most ignorant, the most obscure,—to perceive spiritual truth when distinctly presented; and the ultimate appeal on all moral questions is not to a jury of scholars, a hierarchy of divines, or the prescriptions of a creed, but to the common sense of the human race.” Practically it was felt that the Transcendentalists were dreamers rather than students, that the subjects of their thought were rather the things that cannot be known than those which by patient scientific research they might discover. Idle speculation was to them more attractive than logical reasoning.

Brook Farm However, they made an attempt to put their philosophy into practice. *The Dial* was established by Ripley to advocate their

Brook Farm

views, but after a brief-lived popularity among its supporters it died a natural death four years from the date of the first number. Then Brook Farm, a tract of two hundred acres about nine miles from Boston, was purchased. Here it was proposed to establish a socialistic colony whose members should live in perfect equality, free to think and to grow in mind and soul, but at the same time contributing such labor as was necessary to keep the colony in existence. Property was held in common and each member was allowed a certain percent on his investment and was paid a fixed price for his labor. He might work at what he pleased and was paid the same wages whether his work was intellectual or manual. Members could live in separate establishments or in the common house, but each must pay his living expenses. It was all a beautiful dream of a community in which brotherly love should flourish and in which the arts and sciences should multiply, while vice and crime became unknown. But it was all a dream, however beautiful, and lasted only five years. The energetic bore the burdens as in the world at large and the indolent profited by the exertions of others. Finding their own simple organization a failure, the Transcendentalists adopted the organization of Fourier, a French socialist leader then in the height of his popularity. Financial troubles had come upon them before the change and when in 1846 their com-

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munity building burned, the colony was abandoned.

The Brook Farm experiment had proved a failure, yet it was not without its redeeming features. It had been a delightful experience to many, had brought together some of the most brilliant people of the day under conditions highly favorable to their development, and more than that it had given a strong impetus for good to a number of young people who had been sent there for their education. It is pleasant to remember that while the community adopted Fourierism in part, they quietly ignored the free-love doctrines, and although men and women lived there together the marriage relation was always respected and no suspicion of scandal ever arose against them. So great, so pure and so high-minded a group of people it would be difficult to bring together again. The whole experiment is unique in history and the influence it left on literature is without a parallel.

The Transcendentalists And who were the Transcendentalists?

George Ripley was the practical leader in the movement and the Brook Farm experiment left him a debt it took years to satisfy. He became a writer for religious magazines and a regular member of the staff of the *New York Tribune*. A. Bronson Alcott, father of Louisa M. Alcott, an impractical, genial and whole-souled man who taught school and lectured, who wrote and conversed both in England and America, rep-

Margaret Fuller

resented the extreme of transcendental philosophy. He finally established at his home, the Concord School of Philosophy, where he and other notable men lectured and conversed during a series of seven years. Jones Very, the saintly poet of Transcendentalism, wrote weak verse not worthy of admiration.

Margaret Fuller Margaret Fuller, the most highly gifted of the acknowledged leaders, was born in 1810. She was extremely precocious and an unwise father stimulated her intellect and pushed her forward in her studies so rapidly that the effect could always be noticed. She became arrogant and vain, sentimental and exceedingly fond of admiration. So far did these qualities develop that she was often severely criticised and really with some justice. Her romantic attachment for Emerson and her utter failure to interest that calm man to a greater extent than the friendship he was satisfied to give her, and with which she was at last content, is one of the curious idyls of literature. She was in her day a writer of considerable popularity, but her emotional nature and her prejudices prevented her from making a permanent success as a literary critic. She went to England, thence to the continent and finally to Italy, where she became deeply interested in the revolutionary schemes that were then leading to the United Italy of to-day. Here she became infatuated with a young Italian patriot named

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Ossoli, whom she married in secret. Her brief life with him was filled with care and anxiety. A child was born. The husband was in the battles around Rome or embroiled in anxious plotting. Finally they determined to return to America. On the way the captain of the ship died of small-pox, the little boy was stricken with the same disease, and then within sight of land off the harbor of New York the ill-fated ship sank, carrying with her the entire Ossoli family. The most notable characteristic of Margaret Fuller Ossoli was her power to win confidence and friendship. Few if any women could count among their warm personal friends so long a list of famous people.

Nathaniel Hawthorne was for a time a member of the Brook Farm community, but was soon glad to abandon it. He tried "to convert himself into a milkmaid" but did not enjoy the experience any more than being "a chambermaid to cows and pigs," as he expressed it. He embodied some of his experiences in *The Blithedale Romance*. Of him we have written at length in Part Two, page 191, and have printed extended selections from his works in Parts One and Two.

Ralph Waldo Emerson and Thoreau were not identified with the Brook Farm episode, though the latter visited the colony. Both, however, are representatives of the Transcendental school, though differing widely in many respects. A biographical sketch of Emerson will be found

Henry David Thoreau

in Part Four, page 241, and in the same Part his essay on *Self Reliance* is printed entire.

Henry David Thoreau, whose parents were of French descent, was born in 1817 in Connecticut. He graduated at Harvard and then settled at Concord. He was skillful in many ways and by surveying a little, farming a little, making lead pencils and tailoring, he managed to supply himself with the necessities of his simple life and to leave the greater part of his time for thinking and writing. When he worked it was either that he might secure something to eat, something to wear, or that he might learn something from his work. When he found he could make the best of lead pencils he ceased to make them because he had nothing more to learn in that art.

He was an intimate friend and disciple of Emerson and lived in the family for several years at different times. He was also a tutor in the family of Emerson's brother, where he was much loved and respected. He was not altogether a recluse, for he traveled about through the woods of Maine and Canada, into the White Mountains and through the Cape Cod region, sometimes alone and again with some friend, particularly Ellery Channing. But most of his eccentric life was spent in and about Concord, the Concord where Emerson, Hawthorne and the Alcotts lived, where in the earlier days the colonial patriots had first

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openly withstood the troops of Great Britain. Here he wrote and published *Walden* and *A Week on the Concord and Merrimac Rivers*, the only books given to the public during his life time, the remainder of the nine or ten volumes now in print having been selected from the voluminous diary he left to his friends. *Walden* is a circumstantial and at the same time earnest and poetical account of the period he spent in hermit-like retirement in a little shanty he built for himself on land owned by Emerson and that bordered on Walden Pond, near Concord. Here he lived an abstemious life for nearly two years, cultivating a little patch of land, doing with his own hands all the menial labors necessary for his existence. He says that the house cost him \$28.12½ and that one summer he made from his gardening \$8.71½. These figures give us some idea of the paltriness of his labors and his great contempt for money and for what are called the comforts of life.

But if the wants of his body were few, the needs of his soul were many, and those years of seclusion and privation were years of growth. Their fruit was one of the finest books of the language. His home was in a beautiful spot where the pines whispered their sweet music to his listening ears and bright flowers, graceful vines and the cheery woodland songsters gladdened his watchful eyes. Beauty he saw in everything and his were the keen observant eyes of a trained naturalist. Every-

Henry David Thoreau

thing in nature had its lesson for him, and that lesson he was able to teach to any who have intelligence to read and the love of nature with which to interpret.

His life was a protest against the luxuries and mean vulgarity of those who have no high intellectual purpose in life. He felt that the only hope of reformation for the world was that individuals should reform, and in his perfect sincerity he tried to live up to his ideals, extravagant as they were. We must respect him for the purity of his motives and the consistency of his conduct, though we realize that such a life as he led is not only impracticable but unwholesome for mankind, who must live and work together.

But he was royally sincere. He hated slavery with a bitter hatred, and because slavery was sanctioned by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts he declined to pay his annual poll tax and was thrown into prison for his refusal. While there, Emerson came to see the rugged old philosopher. "Why are you here?" asked the Sage of Concord. Thoreau drew himself up and replied, "Why are you *not* here?" Against the protest of the self-made martyr, Emerson paid the tax and Thoreau was released, protesting that he would never pay to the support of such a government. He kept his word but friends regularly paid the tax for him and he was not again molested.

It is not wise to dwell on what may be to some

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the repellent side of Thoreau's character. What concerns us is his contribution to literature and in that we find ground for great satisfaction. His minute knowledge of nature and his loving portrayal of it, the charm of his quaint observations and the musical qualities of his style make the reading of his essays a continual delight to those who have some understanding of the wild life of nature. He finds in the most unpromising subjects material for his pen and this he treats in sentences and paragraphs that are models of artistic form. Take these examples from *Wild Apples* :

“Near the beginning of May, we notice little thickets of apple-trees just springing up in the pastures where cattle have been,—as the rocky ones of our Easterbrooks country, or the top of Nobscot Hill, in Sudbury. One or two of these perhaps survive the drought and other accidents,—their very birthplace defending them against the encroaching grass and some other dangers, at first.

In two years' time 't had thus
Reached the level of the rocks,
Admired the stretching world,
Nor feared the wandering flocks.

But at this tender age
Its sufferings began :
There came a browsing ox
And cut it down a span.

Henry David Thoreau

“This time, perhaps, the ox does not notice it amid the grass; but the next year, when it has grown more stout, he recognizes it for a fellow-emigrant from the old country, the flavor of whose leaves and twigs he well knows; and though at first he pauses to welcome it, and express his surprise, and gets for answer, “The same cause that brought you here brought me,” he nevertheless browses it again, reflecting, it may be, that he has some title to it.

“Thus cut down annually, it does not despair; but, putting forth two short twigs for every one cut off, it spreads out low along the ground in the hollows or between the rocks, growing more stout and scrubby, until it forms, not a tree as yet, but a little pyramidal, stiff, twiggy mass, almost as solid and impenetrable as a rock. Some of the densest and most impenetrable clumps of bushes that I have ever seen, as well on account of the closeness and stubbornness of their branches as of their thorns, have been these wild-apple scrubs. They are more like the scrubby fir and black spruce on which you stand, and sometimes walk on the tops of mountains, where cold is the demon they contend with, than any thing else. No wonder they are prompted to grow thorns at last, to defend

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themselves against such foes. In their thorniness, however, there is no malice, only some malic acid."

The charm of structure which is seen in his words and sentences is not found to continue beyond, for he did not make books or even essays of length; his ability did not lie in following a long line of uninterrupted and logical thought. So his study of nature was not systematic and purposeful as was Darwin's, but rather the instinctive attention of the poet. However, his place in the literature of America is assured and permanent, a place not inferior to many, though his influence may not be so widely felt as that of less worthy writers.

The Slavery Movement The Transcendental movement dealt with ideals and, as we have seen, most of its ardent advocates were rather impractical, and accomplished no evident, lasting reform. They had their influence upon thought and doubtless have advanced the moral standard of many people, but to say that Transcendentalism is responsible for any great change in American activities is attaching too much importance to it. However, the truth-seeking spirit which prompted it did lead to a revolution in feeling and a reform in government that succeeded finally only at the expense of thousands of lives and untold suffering.

At a much earlier date Channing had written :

The Slavery Movement

“There is one object here which always depresses me. It is *slavery*. This alone would prevent me from ever settling in Virginia. Language cannot express my detestation of it. Master and slave! Nature never made such a distinction, or established such a relation. Man, when forced to substitute the will of another for his own, ceases to be a moral agent; his title to the name of man is extinguished, he becomes a mere machine in the hands of his oppressor. No empire is so valuable as the empire of one’s self. No right is so inseparable from humanity, and so necessary to the improvement of our species, as the right of exerting the powers which nature has given us in the pursuit of any and of every good which we can obtain without doing injury to others. Should you desire it, I will give you some idea of the situation and character of the negroes in Virginia. It is a subject so degrading to humanity that I cannot dwell on it with pleasure. I should be obliged to show you every vice, heightened by every meanness and added to every misery. The influence of slavery on the whites is almost as fatal as on the blacks themselves.”

This opinion was not general even in Boston, for, originally, slavery was universal in the colonies and it was only in the course of years and because of the unprofitableness of slave labor that the institution died out in the north. Long after slaves ceased to be held in Massachusetts the peo-

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ple believed slavery to be right, basing their judgment largely upon the feeling that slaves were property and that neither public sentiment nor governmental authority should be allowed to interfere in such personal rights as were given by the ownership of property. Accordingly, to advocate abolition was to bring upon one's self the odium of popular disapproval and a social ostracism we can now scarcely credit.

William Lloyd
Garrison But there were certain leaders who saw the vital fault in the argument that human beings could be subject to property rights and who fearlessly advocated personal freedom for the blacks. Chief among these was William Lloyd Garrison, who in 1831, when he was about twenty-six years old, founded the *Liberator*. This absolutely sincere man, fanatic though he was, persisted in the publication of his newspaper, always a radical advocate for abolition, till after the close of the Civil war. He lived to see the nation regarding him as the great popular hero of the day, and glorying in the reform he had done so much to produce.

New England
Oratory Representing the same trend of thought, conscious of the rectitude of their own intentions, but bitterly intolerant of the equally sincere ideas of their opponents, were the three great New England orators, Theodore Parker, Wendell Phillips and Charles Sumner. The first was a minister, a graduate of Harvard and one

New England Oratory

of the most celebrated scholars of the day. Unitarian and Transcendentalist as he was, he was gifted also with the nature of a practical reformer, and his passionate eloquence was consecrated to an unflinching advocacy of abolition. He never wavered, was uncompromising, and his bitter invectives often drove the wavering away rather than attracted them to his cause. He died at Florence where he had gone to regain his health, just before the terrible conflict that was to result in the fruition of his hopes.

Phillips and Sumner both lived to see the liberation of the slaves, and the latter was a distinguished figure in the national capitol before and after the war. The oratory of Phillips was polished and refined, and while it often seemed to lack the passionate sincerity of Parker it was scholarly and artistic and possessed that power of winning the sympathy of his audience which was lacking in the speech of the New England divine. Parker and Sumner were Harvard men and both were from the more cultured class. Different as they were, they had one trait in common, a violence and license in speech that often degenerated into personal abuse. For an attack of this sort on a South Carolina senator, Sumner was almost killed in the Senate Chamber at Washington.

Though the powerful oratory of these men exerted its tremendous influence upon the period, it

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is hardly just to call their speeches literature ; yet there are in the work of each, passages of great literary excellence. When men have a specific purpose in view, their utterance, however forcible and influential, is not apt to long outlive the epoch for which it was intended. But that which perhaps more than any other single thing aided in creating among the masses a sentiment against slavery was a book, a novel by Harriet Beecher Stowe. *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was written for a distinct purpose, but even now, long after the events which called it into being have passed into history, the book continues to be read with unabated interest.

Harriet Beecher
Stowe Mrs. Stowe, a sister of Henry Ward Beecher, was the wife of a professor in Bowdoin college, and though burdened by the cares of a family she saw in the sufferings of the black race at the south a theme that moved her passionately. The result was a novel which in spite of its prejudices and exaggerations is an artistic creation, a vivid picture of human misery lightened now and then by pleasing rays of sympathy and affection. The book, published in 1852, was read everywhere and left behind it a conviction of the horror of slavery and a determination that some action must be taken. The remarkable influence of the book was not confined to America, for it was translated into twenty languages and millions of copies were sold.

John Greenleaf Whittier

Mrs. Stowe wrote other novels, and were its fame not eclipsed by *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, her *Old Town Folks* would have gained her an enviable reputation, for its pictures of certain types of New England character are quite as apt and true to life as those of her more popular work.

John Greenleaf Whittier Among the anti-slavery writers, one of the most active and influential was

John Greenleaf Whittier whose biography has been sketched in Part Seven, page 137. No other American poet of equal prominence wrote so much and so effectively on the subject that called forth his most fervid utterance. His Quaker spirit was opposed to war, but when he saw war to be inevitable he was ready for the conflict.

“Strike, Thou the Master, we Thy keys,
The anthem of the destinies!
The minor of thy loftier strain,
Our hearts shall breathe the old refrain,
Thy will be done!”

His great claim to renown as a man of letters does not rest upon the fiery poems of freedom, but upon the simple, sincere and loving poems in which he shows his generous heart. They deal with subjects of universal and perpetual interest. Though sometimes he is commonplace and now and again his lack of scholarship may show, yet he has a power and artistic merit that place him foremost among those who may be called the anti-

American Literature

slavery agitators and is really one of those who are distinctly men of letters.

Summary To sum up this brief sketch nothing can be better than the following, quoted from Barrett Wendell's *Literary History of America*:

“Yet without a constant sense of the influences which were alive in the New England air, the literature which finally arose there can hardly be understood. It was all based on the traditions of a rigid old society, Puritan in origin and immemorially fixed in structure. To this, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, came that impulse of new life which expressed itself in such varied ways,—in the classically rounded periods of our most finished oratory; in the scholarship which ripened into our lasting works of history; in the hopeful dreams of the Unitarians, passing insensibly into the nebulous philosophy of the Transcendentalists, and finally into first fantastic and soon militant reform. Each of these phases of our Renaissance gave us names which are still worth memory: Webster, Everett, and Choate; Ticknor, Prescott, Motley, and Parkman; Emerson, Margaret Fuller, and Thoreau; Theodore Parker, Phillips, and Sumner; Mrs. Stowe and Whittier. Thus

Summary

grouped together we can see these people to have been so dissimilar, and sometimes so antagonistic, that human friendship between them, or even mutual understanding, was hardly possible. At the same time as we look at them together, we must see that all possessed in common a trait which marks them as of the old New England race. Each and all were strenuously earnest; and though the earnestness of some confined itself to matters of this world,—to history, to politics, and to reform,—while that of others was centered, like that of the Puritan fathers, more on the unseen eternities, not one of them was ever free from a constant ideal of principle, of duty. Nor was the idealism of these men always confined to matters of conduct. In Emerson, more certainly than in the fathers themselves, one feels the ceaseless effort of New England to grasp, to understand, to formulate the realities which must forever lie beyond the human ken. The New Englanders of our Renaissance were no longer Puritans; they had discarded the grim dogmas of Calvinism; but so far as Puritanism was a lifelong effort to recognize and to follow ideals which can never be apprehended by unaided human senses, they were still Puritan at heart."

Studies

1. What was there in the nature of Transcendentalism that made its influence only evanescent?

2. Who were the leaders in the Brook Farm experiment? Speak of the character of each.

3. Read Hawthorne's *Blithedale Romance* in order to realize more vividly the nature and causes of failure of the Brook Farm experiment. Bear in mind, as you read, that the character of Zenobia is to an extent drawn from that of Margaret Fuller Ossoli.

4. Can you find the Transcendental attitude revealed in *The Great Stone Face*? Do you think that Hawthorne is too prone to indulge in imaginative flights and mysterious vagaries?

5. Tell briefly in your own words what constituted the essence of Emerson's philosophy. Can you find points of similarity between him and Carlyle? Which of the two writers seems to you more lucid and forcible?

6. Give a brief sketch of Thoreau's personality. Why is it well for the world that such temperaments as that of Thoreau are rare? Contrast Thoreau's interest in nature with that of Darwin.

7. Describe the practical reform movement which developed from the same earnest spirit that manifested itself impractically in Transcendentalism.

Studies

8. Reread the selection from Channing. Would you not think that from the writer's own experience he was peculiarly well fitted to say that "no empire is so valuable as the empire of one's self"? Can you find this thought expressed in other form in Emerson's essay on *Self-Reliance*?

9. Why are the speeches of the three great orators, Sumner, Parker and Phillips, not considered permanent literature?

10. Can you think of any other instance in history where a book was so obviously influential in causing reform as Mrs. Stowe's story?

11. Account for the fact that Whittier's later poems are far more artistic than his slavery poems.

12. What is meant by the revival or Renaissance that took place in New England?

13. Reread carefully Barrett Wendell's summary of the development of this revival. Describe in chronological order the various phases of the Renaissance; characterize briefly the representative writers connected with each phase; try to get such a definite idea of the personality of each that you can comprehend what is meant by saying that they were "so dissimilar, and sometimes so antagonistic, that human friendship between them, or even mutual understanding, was hardly possible;" and get clearly in mind the common qualities which bound them together.

New England's Golden Age

We have now reached the culmination of New England's golden age of literature and so far have taken little account of four men who rank with Emerson and Whittier as the first among American men of letters. These are Hawthorne, Holmes, Longfellow and Lowell.

Of Hawthorne an account will be found in Part Two, page 191.

Biographical sketches of the others will be found as follows:

Holmes, Part Eight, page 263.

Longfellow, Part Ten, page 277.

Lowell, Part Nine, page 133.

Numerous selections from their works may be readily found by consulting the Index.

Longfellow is undoubtedly first in popularity as Lowell is in scholarly excellence. Emerson may be considered first in profundity of thought and in power of phraseology. Longfellow, on the other hand, is the strong and self-reliant soul whose sweetness of disposition and loveliness of character are no less conspicuous in his writings than Emerson's were in his daily life. Holmes is first as a genial, altogether happy poet of occa-

New England's Golden Age

sion, whose lyrical expression is usually gay and rollicking, though oftentimes serenely beautiful. Lowell is the scholar, the critic, the earnest man of affairs, but the master of elegant phrase and vigorous expression. It is not worth our while to try to rank these men in order of greatness; let them all stand first, a sextet of excellence, Whittier, Holmes, Longfellow, Hawthorne, Lowell and Emerson. America can never cease to be proud of these her greatest literary men, great in the power of their writings, equally great in the purity and sublimity of personal character.

The table on page 260 shows graphically for comparison the principal dates in the lives of the six. How intimately are they connected! All were born in the first nineteen years of the century and for forty-five years all were living. Hawthorne was the first to go, at the comparatively youthful age of sixty; Longfellow next at seventy-five; Emerson lived to be seventy-nine, Lowell was eighty-two, Whittier and Holmes both eighty-five. Longfellow and Whittier were born in the same year, Emerson and Longfellow died in the same year.

But the association of these men was not merely one of dates; they were acquaintances and friends and mention one another often in their writings; in fact Holmes wrote a very readable biography of Emerson, and Longfellow and Lowell exchanged beautiful sympathetic poems in hours of bereave-

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Dates of Some Principal Events in the Lives of Six Great American Authors

	1800	1810	1820	1830	1840	1850	1860	1870	1880	1890
Emerson	Born 1803 Boston		Graduated at Harvard 1821	<i>Nature</i> 1836 <i>The American Scholar</i> , 1837	<i>Essays</i> 1841-1844	<i>Representative Men</i> , 1850 <i>English Traits</i> , 1856	<i>May Day and Other Poems</i> , 1867	<i>The Fortune of the Republic</i> , 1878	Died 1882 Concord Buried in Sleepy Hollow	
Twain	Born 1834 Salem		*Graduated at Bowdoin 1855 <i>Sketches</i> , 1868	<i>Twain's First Tale</i> 1857-1864	<i>Sketches</i> 1850 <i>Sketches of Some of the Early English Literature</i> , 1851 <i>Sketches of Some of the Early English Literature</i> , 1851	<i>Sketches</i> 1850 <i>Sketches of Some of the Early English Literature</i> , 1851 <i>Sketches of Some of the Early English Literature</i> , 1851	<i>Sketches</i> 1850 <i>Sketches of Some of the Early English Literature</i> , 1851 <i>Sketches of Some of the Early English Literature</i> , 1851			
Longfellow	Born 1807 Portland		Graduated at Bowdoin 1825	<i>Poems of the Night</i> , 1839 Professor Modern Languages at Harvard, 1839-1854	<i>Spanish Student</i> 1843 <i>Evangeline</i> 1847	<i>Miller's Spanish</i> 1853 <i>Hamlet</i> , 1855 <i>Hamlet</i> , 1855	<i>Tales of Weymouth</i> , 1861 1861-1862	Died 1882 Cambridge Buried Mt. Auburn		
Walt Whitman	Born 1807 Haverhill	Meager Education		<i>New England Legend</i> , 1831 Anti-slavery Poems and Newspaper Articles, 1831-1866	<i>First of Frost</i> 1849	<i>First of Frost</i> 1849	<i>First of Frost</i> 1849		Died 1892 Hampden Falls Buried at Haverhill Mt. Auburn	
Bolton	Born 1809 Cambridge		Graduated at Harvard 1829	<i>Old Ironsides</i> 1830	Professor of Anatomy at Harvard, 1847-1888	<i>First of Frost</i> 1849	<i>First of Frost</i> 1849	<i>First of Frost</i> 1849	Died 1894 Boston Buried Mt. Auburn	
Howell	Born 1819 Cambridge		Graduated at Harvard 1838	<i>English Papers</i> , 1848-1857 <i>Among My Books</i> , 1870 <i>Among My Books</i> , 1870	<i>English Papers</i> , 1848-1857 <i>Among My Books</i> , 1870 <i>Among My Books</i> , 1870	<i>English Papers</i> , 1848-1857 <i>Among My Books</i> , 1870 <i>Among My Books</i> , 1870	<i>English Papers</i> , 1848-1857 <i>Among My Books</i> , 1870 <i>Among My Books</i> , 1870	<i>English Papers</i> , 1848-1857 <i>Among My Books</i> , 1870 <i>Among My Books</i> , 1870	Died 1892 Cambridge Buried at Mt. Auburn	

New England's Golden Age

ment. Holmes says Emerson was "an iconoclast who took down our idols from their pedestals so tenderly that it seemed an act of worship." Emerson, who lived beside Hawthorne, rarely saw him; they liked each other but could not be intimate. Emerson wrote of Hawthorne: "It was easy to talk with him, there were no barriers, only he said so little that I talked too much, and stopped only because as he gave no indications I feared to exceed. He showed no egotism, no self-assertion — I admired the man, who was simple, amiable, truth loving and frank in conversation."

Longfellow's estimate of Emerson was: "He is one of the finest lecturers I ever heard, with magnificent passages of true prose poetry. But is all *dreamery* after all." It was Holmes who wrote in a friendly letter to Lowell, "I have always considered my face a convenience rather than an ornament."

These meager quotations give very little idea of the real relationships between them. There was the Saturday club of which most of them were members; but perhaps as strong a bond as any, next to their connection with Harvard, was the famous magazine still in existence that was founded in 1857. The function of *The Atlantic Monthly* from the first was literary, and it has held to its purpose in spite of the later decadence of literature in Boston. At the beginning, too, its con-

American Literature

tributors were largely men whose reputation had already been assured. A glance at the chart on page 260 will show how well the six great writers were known in 1857. All of them contributed largely to the magazine and here Holmes published his *Autocrat* series.

James T. Fields was not the founder of *The Atlantic*, but he was the publisher for many years and the editor for some time. The house of which he was a member, and which still survives under the name of Houghton, Mifflin & Co., published all of the works of the six great men, as well as those of Thoreau and a host of lesser writers. No history of American literature is complete without the name of Fields, the lover of good literature, the publisher, critic, adviser and friend of American men of letters. His own *Yesterdays with Authors* is a book of delightful reminiscences of his acquaintance with literary people.

Historians America has had during the century a group of eminent historians distinguished as much by the literary style of their writings as by the breadth and minuteness of their investigations. They are rather of the narrative than the philosophical type, and, choosing epochs of great natural interest, they succeeded in producing absorbing books. These men are George Bancroft, who selected the history of the United States for his topic; Francis Parkman, whose

George Bancroft

subject is the French and English struggle in America ; William Hickling Prescott, the chronicler of Spanish conquest in America and of the same period in Spain ; and Joseph Motley, the great historian of the Netherlands. Contemporaneous with these were several others who wrote well, enjoyed their share of popularity and doubtless assisted in making possible the work of the greater men. Among these lesser historians are Jared Sparks, Richard Hildreth, T. W. Higginson, John G. Palfrey. But none of these approaches in rank the four first mentioned, who stand unrivaled in their department as did the Boston group in pure literature.

George Bancroft George Bancroft was born in 1800 in Massachusetts and was a graduate of Harvard at sixteen. He studied in the universities of Germany and traveled extensively in Europe. He was always active in public affairs and occupied important positions under our government, both at home and abroad. His first volume of the *History of the United States* was published in 1834 and the sixth and last not until fifty years later. The periods he chose were the colonial and revolutionary, and his history terminates at the constitutional period which began in 1789. The style of his writing is clear, direct and precise. His aim is to present facts and this he does without deliberate intention to entertain. His is philosophical work but not so severe and

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exacting as is that of the more recent school. While his books are interesting they do not absorb the attention as do those of Parkman and Motley.

Francis
Parkman

Francis Parkman, like Emerson, Lowell and Holmes, was the son of a Massachusetts clergyman and graduated from Harvard. He attempted fiction but his novel was a failure. His *Oregon Trail*, which details his experiences among the Indians, has been very successful and is always interesting to the class of readers who find Cooper fascinating. The great work of his life was to tell the story of those bloody struggles which terminated in the overthrow of French authority in America. The books did not appear in the order of the events they describe but when collected make what the author calls a "series of historical narratives." Of these *The Conspiracy of Pontiac* is perhaps the most thrilling, the most suggestive of Cooper. *LaSalle and the Discovery of the Northwest* reads like fiction and abounds in the vivid descriptions which are the most characteristic features of his work. The two volumes *Montcalm and Wolfe* are typical both in style and matter of Parkman's best work.

The story of his life is one of surprising determination and unremitting labor under conditions most unfavorable to intellectual effort. He was always of delicate constitution and the exposure and privations incident to the trip he describes

Francis Parkman

in the *Oregon Trail* left him a lifelong invalid. He was often unable to work for more than a few hours at a time, and was compelled to have some one read to him, and to do his writing by dictation. In spite of these obstacles, however, he made exhaustive studies, consulting and translating masses of manuscripts, visiting the places he described and going many times to Europe to collect the material he needed. His was a wonderful life of laborious consecration to a purpose he had conceived almost in boyhood and which he lived to see realized in the completion of his histories.

It would be easy to grow enthusiastic over his life and writings for the spirit and dash of his words are infectious. He sought eagerly for every point that would make a picturesque narrative, and rejected nothing that would add to the reality of the characters he described. Under his pen individuals are truly alive; LaSalle, Montcalm and Wolfe have a personality as vivid as that of the Indians he loves most to describe. He shows a faculty for minute observation and picturesque description of nature that almost rivals Thoreau, as may be seen by this description of Champlain in a Canadian winter:

“ This wintry purgatory wore away; the icy stalactites that hung from the cliffs fell crashing to the earth; the clamor of wild geese was heard; the bluebird appeared in the naked

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woods; the water-willows were covered with their soft caterpillar-like blossoms; the twigs of the swamp maple were flushed with ruddy bloom; the ash hung out its black tufts; the shadbush seemed a wreath of snow; the white stars of the bloodroot gleamed among dank, fallen leaves, and in the young grass of the wet meadows the marsh marigolds shone like spots of gold."

William Hick-
ling Prescott

William H. Prescott was the son of a prominent lawyer of Salem who removed to Boston, where his son was educated at Harvard. In his junior year young Prescott met with an accident that destroyed entirely the sight of one eye and injured the other so that he was never able to read or write again without assistance. Like Parkman, his family was in easy circumstances so that he was not compelled to work for his existence, but had that leisure and that comfortable environment so conducive to literary success. His first work was not published till he was forty years old, but it embodied the results of ten years of study and research. He regulated his life by absolute rules and sacrificed everything to his one great purpose. What an inspiring heritage to Americans is the work of these two great countrymen, Parkman and Prescott—a heritage of courage, of persistence in a worthy ambition, and of successful achievement! The biographer

William Bickling Prescott

of Prescott says he was "tall, well-formed, manly in his bearing but gentle, with light brown hair that was hardly changed or diminished by years, with a clear complexion, and a ruddy flush on his cheek that kept for him to the last an appearance of comparative youth, but above all with a smile that was the most absolutely contagious I ever looked upon."

Longfellow spoke to him just a few days before his death and describes the interview thus: "I met him in Washington Street just at the foot of Winter Street. He was merry and laughing as usual. At the close of the conversation he said: 'I am going to shave off my whiskers, they are growing gray.' 'Gray hair is becoming,' I said. 'Becoming!' said he, 'what do we care about becoming who must so soon *be going*?' 'Then why take the trouble to shave them off?' 'That's true!' he replied with a pleasant laugh, and crossed over to Summer Street. So my last remembrance of him is a sunny smile at the corner of a street."

Prescott's style resembles Parkman's more than any other, but he is less discriminating in his choice of facts. Parkman impresses one with the truthfulness of his narratives, while Prescott often leaves his readers wondering whether the brilliancy of the picture is not due to too high coloring. The critics of to-day are rather severe in their treatment of the latter but he continues to delight

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many readers. His first history was the *Reign of Ferdinand and Isabella*; this was followed by the *Conquest of Mexico*, *Conquest of Peru*, and the *History of Philip the Second*, a work he did not live to complete.

John Lothrop Motley John Lothrop Motley, writing to a friend, has this to say of the way in which he came to write his histories: "I had not first made up my mind to write a history, and then cast about to take up a subject. My subject had taken me up, drawn me on, and absorbed me in itself. It was necessary for me, it seemed, to write the book I had been thinking much of, even if I were destined to fall dead from the press, and I had no inclination or interest to write any other. . . . It was not that I cared about writing a history, but that I felt an inevitable impulse to write *one particular history*."

The one particular history he felt called upon to write was of the Netherlands, which he published as three volumes of *The Rise of the Dutch Republic*, four volumes of *The United Netherlands* and two volumes of *John of Barneveld*. Of these books Richardson says: "As interesting as fiction, as eloquent as the best oratory, they are as trustworthy as accuracy and faithful industry could make them. Motley's portraiture of William the Silent is one of the great delineations of history. Not less able, nor less picturesque, is his remarkable account of the character of Queen Elizabeth

John Lothrop Motley

of England, and of the court and times in which she lived. Writing of the Netherlands, Motley gives us a military, civil, and social history of Europe in an age of great struggles."

Motley was another Massachusetts man and Harvard graduate, born in 1814. In youth he was ambitious to excel in poetry and fiction, but none of his verses are preserved and his novels are forgotten. Holmes, alluding to the charge that Motley was in youth haughty and cynical, says this of his personal appearance: "In after years one who knew Lord Byron most nearly, noted his resemblance to that great poet, and spoke of it to one of my friends; but in our young days many pretty youths affected that resemblance and were laughed at for their pains, so that if Motley recalled Byron's portrait it was only because he could not help it. His finely shaped and expressive features; his large, luminous eyes; his dark, waving hair; the singularly spirited set of his head which was most worthy of note for its shapely form and poise; his well-outlined figure, — all gave promise of his manly beauty and commended him to those even who could not fully appreciate the richer endowments of which they were only the outward signature."

In Germany, as a student, he formed a warm personal friendship with Prince Bismarck which continued through life. He passed much of his

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later life in Europe and had many other notable acquaintances, but his silence, reserve and marked coldness in public, did not give him a wide circle of friends. He was recognized as a diplomat by the government, but a disagreement with the Administration brought about his recall from England under circumstances that were always painful and irritating to him. He has been charged with favoritism and prejudice, with a strong Anti-Catholic leaning. His ardent disposition certainly led him sometimes into very warm regard for people and again into violent disapprobation of them. This spirit finds its way into his history. Prescott writes to him: "You have laid it on Philip rather hard. Indeed you have whittled him down to such an imperceptible point that there is hardly enough of him left to hang a newspaper paragraph on, much less five or six volumes of solid history, as I propose to do. But then you make it up with your hero, William of Orange, and I comfort myself with the reflection that you are looking through a pair of Dutch spectacles, after all." He possessed, too, a profound reverence for abstract right and a horror for wrong that, when he was viewing the atrocities of the awful struggle between Spain and the Netherlands, may have sometimes blinded him to the real situation. Nevertheless public interest in his histories is still unabated, the first being the most generally popular.

Recent Writers

With this group of literary historians we reach the end of the dominance of Boston as a literary center, and perhaps it is as well to close this inadequate sketch at this point, leaving to others the treatment of the lesser lights and more recent and living writers. To discuss Walt Whitman, R. H. Stoddard, Bayard Taylor, E. C. Stedman, Mark Twain, W. D. Howells, Henry James, Eugene Field, James Whitcomb Riley, and the many others who now deserve consideration would extend our sketch far beyond the limits set by our course.

Studies

1. Compare Hawthorne's writings in character with those of Irving and Cooper. What idea do you get of the tendencies of the epochs in which they lived?

2. For what reason are Holmes and Lowell placed in a class by themselves among American men of letters?

3. What common qualities, shown in their character and writings, distinguish the greatest of our poets: Longfellow, Whittier, Lowell, Bryant and Holmes?

4. Why was it impossible for Hawthorne and Emerson to be intimate friends?

5. What important relation did James T. Fields sustain to the development of American literature?

6. Compare the four great historians of the period as regards the fields of research in which their interests lay and the peculiar characteristics of their style.

7. How many writers can you recall who have had to labor under disadvantages similar in nature to those of Parkman and of Prescott?

8. Would you call the selection quoted from Parkman artistic prose?

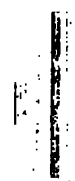
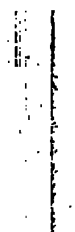
9. What qualities detract from the excellence of Motley's writings?

Studies

10. What can you say from your own acquaintance with them of any of the nine writers mentioned on page 271? Tell what you think of Stedman's power as a critic, as you have noted it in the various quotations from his criticisms given in these volumes.

11. By way of summary: What part of our country was the center of the earliest and most marked development of American literature? Why should this have been so? Name as many as you can of the great writers who are descended from Massachusetts parentage.

Prepare an outline for the entire development of American literature. Make three great divisions: one, the early colonial period in which religion was the theme of literature; a second, the Revolutionary era in which politics furnished subjects for the greatest writers; and third, the period of real American literature. Subdivide as is needed and arrange in each period chronologically the most important of its representative writers. Tell which phase of the growth of our literature is most attractive to you, and of its greatest writers which appeals to you as most interesting and helpful.



Tabular Outline
of
American Authors

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Tabular Outline of American Authors

A. The Colonial Period. The seventeenth and eighteenth century writers.

Anne Bradstreet 1612-1672.

Cotton Mather 1663-1728.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

1706-1790.

B. The National Period. The nineteenth century writers.

I. The Earlier Group.

William Ellery Channing 1780-1842.

WASHINGTON IRVING

1783-1859.

James Fenimore Cooper 1789-1851.

William Cullen Bryant 1794-1878.

William Hickling Prescott

1796-1859.

Edgar Allan Poe 1809-1849.

II. The Civil War Group.

George Bancroft 1800-1891.

RALPH WALDO EMERSON

1803-1882.

NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE

1804-1864.

HENRY WADSWORTH LONG-

FELLOW 1807-1882.

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1807-1892.

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OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES

1809-1894.

John Lothrop Motley 1814-1877.

Henry David Thoreau 1817-1862.

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL

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Francis Parkman 1823-1893.

III. Later Writers.

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Richard Henry Stoddard 1825-

Bayard Taylor 1825-1878.

Edmund Clarence Stedman

1833-

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William Dean Howells 1837-

Henry James 1843-

Eugene Field 1850-1895.

James Whitcomb Riley 1853-



BAYARD TAYLOR

To the Student

You have now completed the course of study in English and American Literature. You have become intimately acquainted with, and learned to appreciate many great masterpieces. You know something of the sources of an author's power, and how he manifests it. You recognize personally a number of fictitious characters whose place in literature is as well established as that of their creators. Besides this you have learned to know the peculiarities and personal qualities of many of the world's famous literary men, have grouped these men in chronological order and have related them as their work compels.

These things you have done, but the greatest purpose of the course has not been accomplished unless you have learned to read more freely, to enjoy more fully, and to long for further study in the numberless books awaiting you. Your taste has improved, and you will read with more discrimination. You will find in the future that it is unnecessary to think particularly about how or what you read. Without effort you will read as you should and the meaning will come to you clearly and distinctly.

But the power you have gained in your recent studies is not of necessity permanent. If one

American Literature

does not continue to read, does not make it a part of his daily recreation, he is almost certain to lose the art and find it necessary to bring himself by study again to the level at which he now stands. Try to read some of the more difficult authors,—those who required most work as you moved on through the course,—and see if in the light of your present power you do not find them more entertaining, more helpful to you. Buy books. The study of literature never ceases; it never even grows old, for there is an inexhaustible supply of good reading worthy of one's time. A long life is not too much to devote to its service.

It is hoped, then, that this course is but an introduction; that you will continue the study, and read on your own responsibility; and will often feel that the year you have spent with the Interstate School has been a pleasant and profitable one.

Little claim is made to originality in the subject-matter of the course. The author has used with great freedom suggestions gathered from numberless good text books used in the course of years of teaching. He has at times followed the methods of greater teachers and again has adapted to his own use many things whose source was long ago forgotten. In arrangement and general method the course is thought to be quite original and it is hoped, effective.

To the Student

It would be useless for the author to attempt to acknowledge all the indebtedness he feels to the publishers, authors and teachers who have assisted directly or indirectly in his work, but it would be unfair and unkind not to thank the critics and proof-readers of the Interstate School of Correspondence for their cheerful and valuable aid. Besides this, the author wishes to give much credit to Miss Grace Edith Sellon, who has contributed many pages of studies and text, who has prepared the appropriate lines for the many illustrations and whose good judgment and keen criticisms have helped to remove many of the traces of hasty work.

C. H. SYLVESTER.

Chicago, Ill.,

January 30, 1902.



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Memoranda

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